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LUTHERAN OUTLOOK

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THE EDITOR'S PAGE

Who's who—Our first article this month is the translation of one appearing in a German church publication, written by Dr. Hans Liermann. The translating was done by Dr. P. H. Buehring of the Columbus Seminary. Then we have an article on "Institutional Devotions" by the Rev. John E. Meyer. Mr. Meyer knows whereof he speaks, for the state of his health dictated his removal from a flourishing mission congregation to a sanatorium a year and a half ago; only recently has his physician permitted him to use the typewriter fifteen or twenty minutes a day. The author of "Preaching Today" wishes to be known only as "Another Layman." His thoughts on the subject were stirred up by the article, "We Are Confused," by a layman in the March issue. Dr. G. Nordberg, who contributed "Our Spiritual Home," is professor of philosophy at Hartwick College, Oneonta, New York.

I have been putting some of the high lights of my correspondence with readers on this page. But this time there is too much of it, and some of the individual contributions deserve better treatment than to be introduced casually into the editor's remarks here. So I have made a collection of them under the heading "Letters." I think you will find them interesting.

With reference to "The Three Kingdoms" by Dr. Paul Fuhrmann in the June issue, the author writes that if any reader wants the source of any of the quotations from Luther, he may have a copy of the article with full documentation, giving the references to Luther's works, phrase by phrase, for twenty cents in stamps. The address is Gammon Theological Seminary, Atlanta, Ga.

I see by the papers that the House Ways and Means Committee proposes a tax of ten per cent on the winnings of professional gamblers, and also an "occupational tax" (which amounts to a license) of \$50 a year on the same gentlemen. Even to think of such a procedure seems to me to be both naive and immoral. It is naive to think that a professional gambler is going to admit by taking out a federal license that he is engaged in a business which is illegal in every state but one; or that he will honestly report what his takings were. And it is im-

moral for the federal government to propose to derive income from that which is illegal. If that is a justifiable point of view, a rich source of income would be to put a tax of \$1,000 on everyone who has an automobile accident.

But I confess that the devious meanderings of the legal mind are somewhat incomprehensible to me. You know for example, that the Supreme Court a few years ago declared the Champaign, Ill., released-time program unconstitutional on the plea of an atheist mother. The basis of the decision was that school buildings, which are public property, may not be used by private religious groups to further their own doctrines, for this would be a violation of the First and Fourteenth Amendments.

I have made no secret of my belief that this is a bad interpretation of law. The First Amendment forbids the establishment of a religion by act of congress, and the Fourteenth extends the prohibition to the states. But the use of public school property by private religious groups may not, in my opinion, be considered the establishment of a religion if the same privilege is extended to all denominations without discrimination, as was the case in the Champaign situation.

Now notice what the Supreme Court decided this year. One case was Kunz vs. New York. New York City had arrested a fundamentalist preacher for preaching in the streets without a license. He had been denied a license because in previous appearances he had been guilty of inciting a public disturbance by making derogatory remarks about other faiths. The Supreme Court held that New York City may not impose a licensing system on religious speakers, and may not deny them the use of its streets or parks.

In a similar case the Supreme Court held that two members of Jehovah's Witnesses could not be denied the use of the public park in Havre de Grace, Maryland, to hold a meeting. The court said that members of religious sects must be free to express their views in public, regardless of how unpopular those views may be.

What I cannot see is this: a school building is public property and a street or park is public property. The use of a public school **may not be granted** to any religious group, says the Supreme

Court, for that would be contrary to the principle of freedom of religion. And the use of a public street or park **may not be denied** to any religious group, says the same Supreme Court, for that would be contrary to the principle of freedom of religion. What is the essential difference between a public school building in Illinois and a public park in Maryland? Do you get it?

And on the other hand the Supreme Court upheld the Sunday closing laws of New York City, under which two Jewish butchers were fined for doing business on Sunday. The court said that the principles of religious liberty was not involved in this case. Law is a curious thing — and lawyers are curiouser.

Beware how you put your sentences together. The Reader's Digest quotes one from a California newspaper: "In the evening he will speak on How to Keep Sane in the First Methodist Church under the direction of Rev. David Young." I wouldn't mind hearing an eminent lawyer speak on How to Understand the Laws under the direction of the Supreme Court.

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EDITORIAL

New York City has a released-time program under which school children are excused from school one hour a week to attend religious classes off the school premises.

This practice has been assailed as unconstitutional in a suit brought by two Brooklyn mothers, Mrs. Tessim Zorach and Mrs. Esta Gluck. The lower courts upheld the constitutionality of the plan. Recently the case was argued before the highest court of the state, the Court of Appeals. A decision has not been rendered at this writing.

The two women are backed in their suit by three Jewish organizations, the American Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Congress, and the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith; also by the Public Education Association, the United Parents' Association of New York City, Inc., the Committee on Academic Freedom of the American Civil Liberties Union, and the New York City Civil Liberties Committee.

Appearing before the Court of Appeals on the other side, to defend the constitutionality of the released-time program, were representatives of the National Council of Churches, and the Greater New York Coordinating Committee on Released Time of Jews, Protestants and Roman Catholics; also John P. McGrath, corporation counsel for New York City, State Solicitor General Wendell Brown, representing the State Education Department, and Attorney General Nathanael Goldstein.

The *Amicus curiae* (friend of the court) brief submitted by Jewish organizations asked the court to rule "that released-time programs, whether the religious instruction is given on or off the school premises, constitute aid to sectarian religious groups." They maintained that the weekly release of children receiving religious instruction has resulted in a feeling of being "left be-

hind" on the part of the non-participants. They quoted Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter in the *McColum* case to the effect that "the law of imitation operates, and non-conformity is not an outstanding characteristic of children. The result is an obvious pressure upon children to attend."

On the other hand, the brief submitted by the National Council of Churches stated that "released time simply gives an opportunity for all three faiths to participate at the same time in their own programs of religious education." It held that the New York program is not affected by the U. S. Supreme Court ruling in the *McColum* case from Illinois, as that decision dealt solely with the use of public school property for religious education purposes. It said, "The released-time statute is designed to give equal opportunity to all denominations and faiths to provide for the religious education of their children during the time permitted for absence from public school. This is the exact opposite of 'an establishment of religion'."

From the array of groups for and against the released-time program one must conclude that this is a matter of primary importance to a great many people. The question is, is it constitutional to permit children to receive religious education, in accordance with the wishes of their parents, at a time when they would otherwise be in school? That is all that is involved, the matter of time. For there is no question that parents may see that their children receive education according to their choice. *If parents were forbidden that right*, that in itself would be contrary to the Constitution.

The question is only whether that religious instruction may be given during one of the twenty-five hours of the week normally used by the public school. Since there are 168 hours in the week, that would seem to be an unimportant question. Are there not many other hours in the week from which one could be chosen for religious

instruction? No, there are not so many. From September to June, when schools are in session, there are many hours of darkness. From the daylight hours the schools have preempted five to seven choice hours of five days in the week. Unless the schools surrender one of those choice hours, there are left only the marginal hours of the day or the hours of Saturday for that purpose. But it is a matter of simple fact that many other things have to be done on Saturdays — shopping trips to buy the children's clothes and shoes, trips to the dentist and the doctor, music lessons, art lessons, visits and parties. Is it a great thing if parents ask for one of the twenty-five or more choice hours that the school claims in order that religion may be put on a level of importance with other subjects of instruction in their children's lives?

It is a little puzzling that Jewish organizations are so regularly among those who oppose released-time. It cannot be because Jews are opposed to religious education; for those Jews who are religious at all are most faithful in seeing that their children are instructed in the faith of their fathers. Is it because these Jewish parents have no organized plan to make use of a released-time hour? If that is all that is bothering them (that their children have a feeling of being "left behind"), the solution would seem to be easy. Let them get organized and use that released time as others do for their children. It seems a poor argument to say, "We do not want to make use of such an hour, so we will do all we can to keep others who want to use it from having the opportunity."

Or is it because they are opposed to *Christian* education, and are merely using the schools and the Constitution as a pretext for curtailing the amount of Christian education given to American children? Why are they joined with freethinkers and atheists and Communists and — believe it or not — some Protestant Christians in trying to deny to parents the right to claim one of the "school hours" for religious education?

The constitutional argument, to my way of thinking, is entirely without validity. The First Amendment says that Congress shall make no law regarding the establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. When equal opportunity is given to all religions to make use of a released-time hour, and no child can be coerced to take such instruction against his parents' wishes, there is certainly no establishment of a religion. But if the wishes of parents to have such an opportunity to have their children instructed in religion are denied, then the legal interpreters of the Constitution are coming dangerously close to "prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

Religion and Education

Religion, education and freedom belong together. "If ye continue in my words," said Jesus, "then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

In this land religion and education were long associated with one another. The New England Primer, with which several generations began their education, included a Christian catechism. The first institutions of higher learning, and many that were established later, were projects of religious people.

But a new era has arrived in our history, an era in which there are many who hold the mistaken notion that the separation of church and state means the separation of religion and life; that the constitutional prohibition of the establishment of a religion means the prohibition of any cooperation between any agency of government and any agency of religion; and that we can only maintain our freedom by denying any rights to religion.

I believe that those three ideas are mistakes: that the separation of religion and life is the cause of our moral decline which has always in history been the beginning of the downfall of great nations; that the Constitution was never meant to prohibit the cooperation of the government with all religions without discrimination (witness the exemption of all church buildings from taxation), but that the Constitution was meant to prohibit the establishment of one religion in preference to others; and that when we begin to deny rights to religious groups we begin to undermine the foundations of our freedom.

Yet many voices are raised in support of those three mistaken notions. *The Christian Century* campaigns alongside of freethinkers and atheists to enforce an absolute separation of religion and education. Baptists submit a brief to the Supreme Court supporting the protest of an atheist mother against any use of public school property at any time for religious purposes. And the Supreme Court upholds the protest. Catholics object to the distribution of Gideon Bibles to public school children, and to the long-time tradition of holding baccalaureate services in different churches in rotation. Jews bring suit against school systems for releasing children to their churches for one hour of religion a week, or for saying the Lord's Prayer in the classroom. Civil liberties associations support all such protests. Municipalities deny the use of public parks to religious groups. What are we trying to do — create by intent an irreligious state? There is one in Russia; is that our model?

There are also voices lifted up against this situation. Dr. Rodney Cline, for example, who is professor of education at Louisiana State University. Writing in *The Boardman*, official publication of the Louisiana School Boards Association, Dr. Cline had this to say:

"Spiritual growth is an aspect of human development which the school has come to regard with delicacy and hesitation. Modern public education in America seeks, as it were, to ignore the existence of any obligation which it may have in this respect. Despite the religious nature and the religious reason for existence of early American education, later trends have ushered in a day when materialistic considerations are all the vogue, while spiritual matters are ignored, if not actually forbidden, as part of the life of the school.

"In jealously guarding against the sectarian dominance of education, a point of reaction has been reached

which is surely too much in the opposite direction. Secularism and religion are by no means synonymous, but in this case they have been treated as such.

"In attempting to see that the religious beliefs and practices of no church might hold sway in the public school, modern society finds itself burdened with an educational situation in which, while the teaching of religion is prohibited, the teaching of things anti-religious is con-
 oned.

"To teach that Almighty God is the Creator and the ruler of the universe is now deemed to be no business of the school. On the other hand, to teach a so-called naturalistic philosophy in which God is not mentioned, and where the learner is supposed to believe that nothing is higher than the materialistic laws of nature, is approvable."

Dr. Cline said in his article that unless a "courageous and intelligent" solution to this problem is found, public education will lose its position of influence due to popular dissatisfaction with its moral and spiritual failure, and that sectarian groups will demand funds for the support of church-controlled schools "to do for their children what the public schools will not do."

The same indictment that Dr. Cline brings against the public schools was brought against the colleges and universities by Dr. Samuel McCrea Cavert, general secretary of the National Council of Churches. Delivering the commencement address at American University, a Methodist institution in Washington, D. C., Dr. Cavert said:

"The lack of serious concern with religion in institutions of higher learning is at least a partial explanation of the lack of dedication and commitment in many of their graduates. In effect, even if not in intent, the educational institutions are saying to students: 'Religion is not important enough to be a concern of the university. We omit it because it is a matter of minor importance, not calling for serious examination'. . . The stark fact is that men are not good enough, not wise enough, to be entrusted with such power as the scientific laboratory has now put into their hands. Now there is the haunting question of whether our mastery of nature is to bring about unprecedented advances in human welfare or plunge us all into the abyss."

That is the way some thoughtful people are speaking and writing about religion and education in twentieth century America. But more voices must be raised in defense of religion in life, and more pressure must be exerted by organized Christian effort, if we are not to wake up some morning with an atheist state by definition and denial by law of religious rights. For while religious people talk and deplore enemies of religion bring their suits and get their court decisions.

For example, William L. Sholes, a Minneapolis lawyer, has gone before the District Court with a complaint against the University of Minnesota, that it has "officially sponsored and aided a program of denominational sectarianism on the campus . . . It is a fact that a sinister leadership has developed on the University of Minnesota campus which disbelieves in the established constitutional principle of separation of Church and State."

Always that stalking-horse, that "front" behind which the opponents of religion in education operate, that reli-

gious people are violating and do not believe in "the established constitutional principle of separation of church and state." That is an untruth which is meant to deceive the unwary. What is the sinister leadership on the campus that Mr. Sholes wants to drive out? It consists of the various foundations by which religious groups aim to serve students of their own faith on the campus. Not long ago a Mr. Frank C. Hughes, a self-styled atheist, tried to get the Justice Department to proceed against the University of Minnesota for this reason, that some of these foundations were permitted to hold meetings in campus buildings. The local U. S. attorney wrote to Washington, and word came back that the Justice Department did not intend to act in the matter.

But now see what Mr. Sholes accomplished. The District Court, that is, Judge Harold N. Rogers, issued a writ of mandamus on the lawyer's plea, directed to the regents of the University. This is the language of the writ:

"You are commanded immediately, after receipt of this writ, to adopt and enforce rules and regulations prohibiting all use of University of Minnesota property and facilities for the teaching or disseminating of any and all sectarian religious doctrine, and prohibiting the use of University of Minnesota property and facilities in aiding one religion, all religions, or preferring one religion over another, or aiding or permitting any religious activities on the university campus, save and except such as are purely secular in nature and are essential to a better understanding of literature, science and the arts, or show cause before this court why you have not done so."

This is legislation by the judiciary, and contrary to the intent and spirit of our government. Legislation is reserved to the people through their elected representatives. That is what "democratic" means — the people have the power. But judges, even those who do not represent the people at all, since they were not elected but appointed (including the justices of the Supreme Court), frequently usurp the authority of the legislative branch of government by their interpretations of laws — interpretations which go contrary to the accepted customs and practices of 175 years of national history. See how easily the will of the people can be overthrown: one lawyer, who does not believe in religion, or wants a little publicity, or both, can go before one judge of like mind, and the judge issues a writ, and immediately what the people have approved by common consent is destroyed or put on the defensive.

Notice the language. "You are commanded (to stop) aiding one religion, all religions, or preferring one religion over another." See how slyly "all religions" is sandwiched between "one religion" and "preferring one religion." Aiding one religion would be establishment. Preferring one religion would be establishment. But aiding all religions by permitting public property to be used by all groups without discrimination is not establishment and has never been so understood. According to the language of that writ, a minister could not go on the campus to visit a sick parishioner, a group of students in a dormitory could not have a religious meeting in their rooms, the president of the university — if he lives in a

university-owned house — could not have private devotions in his home. For “permitting any religious activities on the university campus” is to be prohibited by order of the court.

If the Christian people of this country do not soon demand a clarification of the national position that will keep judges from arbitrary and personal interpretations of law, we may discover too late that we have surrendered our national intent to be a Christian nation under God by default.

Cold Churches

That is a terrible accusation that is brought against the Lutheran churches by a serviceman in one of the letters published elsewhere in this issue. He believes that our congregations are uniformly cold in their welcome to servicemen, and even to civilians.

I am happy to say that I believe this generalization to be untrue. I have preached in Lutheran churches across this land from Washington to North Carolina and from New York to California. In all of them I have found the same kind of people for the most part — simple, genuine, unaffected, kindly, Christian people. Of course, I never came to them dressed in the uniform of one of the services. It may be that the very fact that I am a preacher makes it impossible for me to see a congregation as a casual visitor would. But I am persuaded that Pfc. J. B., who wrote the letter alluded to, must have had an unusual run of hard luck in the churches he visited. With the emphasis on evangelism being what it is in the present church generation, I would suppose that a stranger could hardly show his face in any worshiping congregation without being surrounded, welcomed, and pressed with invitations to return.

This is not meant as a blanket exoneration of all our churches from the charge of being cold to the stranger. Certainly the soldier knows what his own experiences have been. Therefore there must still be churches among us which have not practiced the virtue of entertaining strangers, and thereby perhaps entertaining angels unawares (Heb. 13:2.) I say “still” for the day does not yet lie in the remote past when the Lutheran congregation in a community was likely to be a closed corporation. If it was composed of people of German ancestry, the appearance of an Irishman or an Italian at the service would

have been an unthinkable phenomenon, and people would have looked at the stranger like a cow looking at a new barn door. The same attitude was found, no doubt, in the Swedish or Norwegian or Danish or Finnish groups.

But those days are gone forever. We are now graduating from our Lutheran seminaries young men with names like O’Sullivan and Kennedy as well as the usual Schmidts, Andersons and Olsens. If there is even a little coldness and exclusiveness left in our churches today, however, it is too much. Surely by this time the Lutheran Church in America can make the famous line from Horace her sincere confession: “Nothing human is foreign to me.”

Perhaps the servicemen are themselves partly to blame for an occasional cold reception. Downtown today I walked along the sidewalk past several large buses filled with young soldiers in transit. Near me walked a young woman, going the same way. You could tell that she had been well brought up; she held her head up and her eyes looked straight forward. But she did not pass a single bus without being whistled at or called to. And these were nice, clean-looking young lads just out of high school, boys like yours and mine and our neighbors’. It is just traditional that a bunch of soldiers will whistle at any pretty girl, and so these kids, hardly off their own front porches, were living up to army tradition.

Congregations located near army camps may also develop an allergy to uniforms because of what their members have seen of the conduct of soldiers on leave in town — the drinking, the brawls, the kind of women they run around with. After such observations, if you had a young daughter in your home, you, too, might not be inclined to invite soldiers there. Certainly the young soldiers who hunt up a church to worship in on Sunday morning are not the same as those who were carousing in the red light district on Saturday night. But the uniform makes them all look alike.

Nevertheless, let us remember that our own boys, from our own congregations, from our own families, are being drawn into the service of their country as well as others. We want them to stay clean-cut, clean-thinking, Christian boys. We would be happy if we could think of them as attending church every Sunday in a congregation of their own faith. But if they are to be welcome in the churches where they are, then other people’s boys will have to be welcome in the churches where we are. Suppose, the next time you see a boy in uniform in your church, you go out of your way to show a little interest in him.

The World Council of Churches

A Study in Organization *

Ecumenical striving for the unification of Christendom is first of all and most directly a matter of theological concern. The words of our Lord about the one fold and the one Shepherd (John 10:16) and His prayer "that they may be one" (John 17:21), as well as the words of the Evangelist "that He should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad" (John 11:52), plainly indicate this.

But unity and division are at the same time also sociological, historical, legal, and political phenomena. Externally, unity can appear only in organizational form, of one sort or another, loosely or tightly organized. This latter thought, that unity may be demonstrated in various forms, suggests at once the whole gamut of problems with which the struggle for Christian unity must contend. The goal, "that they may be one," is set before all, but the achievement of that goal is sought in different ways.

1.

The utterly tragic character of all this striving for the unification of Christendom by different routes that, humanly speaking, cannot converge at the same goal becomes apparent at once when one considers the fact that "ecumenical" and "catholic" linguistically mean one and the same thing. "Ecumenical" means "wherever men live in the world," and "catholic" means "throughout the whole world." Thus the idea of a world-church is contained equally in both concepts. But the structural framework of that world-church which is the common goal is an altogether different one in ecumenical thinking than in Catholic thinking.

Wherever in the world men are joined in a unity, this may be done in one of two ways: authoritarian and associative. The authoritarian form means subjection to one superior will, the associative form signifies a common decision of the wills of equals. The Pope on his *sedes gestatoria*, and the ecumenical conference at a roundtable with no "higher" and "lower" places—these two pictures are a more eloquent description of the two forms than many words.

Thus the Catholic unity is characterized as an authoritarian unity. It would be a mistake to associate this fact in any manner with some cheap and superficial value-

judgment, suggestive as it may be to draw a parallel between the *pax Catholica* and the *pax Romana*, and to view the Roman world-church, also in this respect, as the heir of the Roman world-empire. Rather the foundations for this concept are anchored deeply in dogmatic presuppositions. As is well known, the Catholic Church considers the passage, Matt. 16:18, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my *ecclesia*," as the charter of the church by divine right. Everything else follows from it with logical consistency. Since Christ has established only one church with Peter the first Pope as its head, there can be only this one church. Every baptized individual belongs to it. By reason of his baptism every Protestant, Anglican, Greek, Orthodox, is also a member of it. The church founded by Christ is *the* one church. There simply cannot be any others. Those who have separated from it externally, after all, in the final analysis, still belong to it. The unity of Christendom therefore, according to the Catholic conception, already exists organizationally, ever since the church, which is identical with the Roman Catholic Church, was called into being by a divine act. Unity can therefore be brought about only in this way that those members of the church who have separated from it externally, recognize the totality of the church and return to it.

I must be expressly stated here that this Catholic unity by no means involves complete uniformity. Thus the oriental churches that have joined the Roman church were permitted to retain their Greek, Armenian, Syrian, or Coptic rites and liturgy. The new ecclesiastical law-book, the *Codex Iuris Canonici* of 1917, is valid, as a matter of principle, only for the occidental Latin church, not for the oriental churches united with Rome. Even in the history of the German Reformation similar lines of thought appeared during the brief episode of its collapse after the Smalcaldic War, when those who thought of a compromise between the confessions on the basis of the Augsburg Interim of 1548 thought (to use modern terms) of an Evangelical Church united with Rome but with its own liturgy including the "communion under both kinds" and with the special privilege of the marriage of its priests. But all these examples simply show that any Catholic unity can only be an authoritarian one, an absorption in the one Catholic Church, and this fact cannot be obscured in its fundamental significance by any relative independence in ritual or practice that may be granted. The official pronouncements of the Catholic Church on the question of church unity emphasize this over and over again with unmistakable clarity.

In contrast to all this, the ecumenical way to unity is an altogether different one. It seeks associative forms. The fact that this way is open at all rests again upon a

*The *Evangelisch Lutherische Kirchenzeitung*, official periodical of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany, in its issue for April 30, 1951, carried an article by Hans Liermann entitled "Oekumene als rechtliche Erscheinung." It is in fact a study of the World Council of Churches as a world organization. In view of the unquestioned interest in the subject among American Lutherans and the divergency of views concerning it, the article is here offered in English translation. The translator has taken the liberty of giving it the above title rather than attempt to render the original in English. —P. H. BUEHRING.

basic dogmatic attitude that is common to the churches of the ecumenical group. While the Catholic Church can think only in terms of the singular "church," the ecumenical group uses the plural "churches" without embarrassment. The non-Roman Catholic churches view the several ecclesiastical bodies only as parts of the Church of Jesus Christ which embraces all churches. These organizationally separate churches are, as the Greek Orthodox churches say, "autocephalous," that is, each has its own head. The Orthodox Greeks thus think of an autonomous bishop, archbishop, or patriarch, who is not required to accept directives from any other ecclesiastical head, whether it be the Bishop of Rome or the Bishop of Constantinople. But we need not confine the concept of autocephaly among the ecumenical groups to an episcopal supreme head of the church. Even the churches that do not have a bishop but a synod as their supreme legislative and executive organ, are in this sense autocephalous.

Thus in the World Council of Churches we are concerned with a group of sovereign churches, which by joining the ecumenical relationship do not surrender their sovereignty. This again becomes quite clear by considering the opposite example of the Roman idea of unity. A church that enters into union with Rome must give up its ecclesiastical sovereignty. In matters of faith it must subject itself to the dogma of infallibility.

To be sure, the World Council of Churches in its present form as a free association of sovereign churches has gone a long difficult way in its development. It actually appears as something relatively new. For it is something quite different from the religious combinations of earlier times, which—aside from complete absorption of one religion by another—always ended either in syncretism, i. e., a commingling of religions, or in latitudinarianism, i. e., indifference toward fundamental elements of faith. At the same time all external compulsion to achieve uniformity is avoided—something of which, by way of example, the history of the union of Lutherans and Reformed in Germany has not been free.

2.

When the question is faced how denominations that take their confession seriously and consider their form of the Christian faith as the only correct one, can nevertheless associate themselves with other denominations, the only explanation lies in the fact that there are two kinds of intolerance, a dogmatic and a practical one. Every denomination must be *dogmatically* intolerant unless it wants to face its own dissolution. This is first of all not theological but a quite sober sociological truth. A denomination constitutes itself around some sort of a confession and exists only because of that confession. When that confession becomes a matter of indifference, the denomination no longer has any meaningful purpose and is bound to disintegrate sooner or later. On the other hand, *practical* intolerance is not indispensable to the life of a denomination, though this has long and often been

believed. It is an achievement of the much maligned *Aufklärung* to have prepared the intellectual basis for this insight. In addition there is the large scale intermingling of adherents of various confessions brought about during the last hundred years by commercial and social intercourse, industrialization, and in recent times by the great catastrophies. From the dual viewpoint of dogmatic intolerance, i. e., emphatic adherence to one's own creedal assets, and of practical tolerance, i. e., respect for the other in his own individuality, the World Council of Churches as a special phenomenon can be understood at once without any difficulty.

For this reason the Council is still young. Although ever since the confessional division of Christendom a few enlightened spirits like Hugo Grotius and Leibnitz have wrestled with this problem, the present World Council as such is really a child of the 20th century. It is typical for it that it has grown out of practical work. While in former centuries all attempts to unify the church were always made through doctrinal discussions, which frequently resulted in greater cleavages instead of approaches to unity, it remained for the 20th century with its practical labors toward a common goal to bring the churches together quite automatically. Leaders of various denominations in the area of foreign missions met together and came to the conclusion that a common goal could be reached better if they stood together than if they opposed each other. World peace became a matter of serious concern for many Christians even before the first World War, as they viewed the armament race of the nations, and thus the World Alliance for International Friendship through the Churches came into being—an early ecumenical organization in which interested parties from the most diverse denominations worked together even in the first decade of the 20th century and whose formal constitution was adopted at a conference in Constance on August 1, 1941, the very hour when the world bade farewell to peace for decades.

The credit for having clearly seen that joint labors at the great tasks of the present time can bring Christians of all denominations together more quickly than doctrinal discussions (however peaceful their intentions may be) belongs to the Lutheran Archbishop of Uppsala, Nathan Soederblom. It was he that in 1925 called together at Stockholm a great conference on the practical implications of the Christian faith, which was to become the first ecumenical council in the sense of the present day World Council. Wisely linking it to the "life and work" of the church (a happy formulation!) Soederblom dared and succeeded.

The project was accomplished. For its accomplishment it is significant that as a matter of course an invitation was also extended to the Roman Catholic Church, and that the invitation had to be declined by that church equally as a matter of course. For by sitting down at a conference table together with other churches, the Roman church would at least have granted *de facto* recognition to those churches and thus have surrendered a

dogmatically binding principle that could not be compromised. On the other hand, the entire non-Roman Catholicism was represented at Stockholm: Orthodox Greeks, Anglo-Catholics, and Old-Catholics. It is important to emphasize this, for frequently the ecumenical movement is viewed only as a movement of world-Protestantism. It goes far beyond that and also embraces churches that decline in any manner to be considered as reformatory or protestant.

The Stockholm conference was not a mere flash in the pan. A fortunate dispensation caused it to fall in the year 1925, a time of relative quiet between the two World Wars. Thus it was enabled to continue its work for many years through a continuation committee across the boundaries of states, peoples, and churches. In this way the ecumenical idea became a spiritual force, something that became generally known even beyond the church groups directly interested.

The Stockholm success gave encouragement to the much bolder attempt of a second ecumenical conference, held at Lausanne in 1927. It was especially the Anglo-Saxons with their naive optimism who thought it must be possible to carry on ecumenical conversations not only on life and work but also on faith and order. Thus a new approach was made to the doctrinal discussions of earlier centuries. At the same time it was clear to everybody that the Lausanne colloquy meant a much greater venture than the Stockholm conference. But on the basis of the Stockholm platform the venture was made, and to some extent the same men and church groups appeared on the scene. The undertaking succeeded at least insofar as the discussions did not lead to further divisions; and the general desire, if not for unity then at least for a closer approach, mutual respect and fraternal spirit was demonstrated and did not remain without effect on the outside. The visible proof for the success of the Lausanne conference was its continued existence in a continuation committee.

Thus the ecumenical movement was carried forward after 1927 in two continuation committees, the one of Stockholm for "life and work," and the one of Lausanne for "faith and order." It was most fortunate that this double organization did not lead to a gradual parting of the ways between the two but rather to a search for possible union. In addition, the conditions of the times called for their conjunction. The year 1927, in which the Lausanne conference had taken place, was the last year of a happy prosperity between the two World Wars. A retrogressive movement of the world economy set in and there were flashes of lightning on the political horizon. There really was not much time for extended discussions and debates within the ecumenical movement. Great dangers and tremendous tasks were in the offering.

In addition, there came the papal encyclical *Mortalium animos* of January 6, 1928. In itself, it brought nothing new. But it did set forth the Roman Catholic principle of the one Catholic Church over against the ecumenical movement once more with all possible emphasis. That

was reason enough to work for absolute peace within the ecumenical camp.

In practice the Catholic attitude shows a certain elasticity. The canon law in principle forbids all religious fellowship with non-Catholic Christians and all official doctrinal discussions with them. Participation in ecumenical meetings was strictly forbidden in 1948, but since 1950 the reins have been somewhat relaxed again. On the Catholic side the point of primary interest is the *Una Sancta* movement, which was started by the Roman Catholic priest Max Joseph Metzger, who was executed as a martyr in the Third Reich. Its purpose, as its own formulation declares, is the establishment of a creative peace among the denominations with the goal of a general reunion of the churches, which is however defined expressly as an ultimate goal. Its proximate aim is to bring out whatever is held in common and to recognize the positive values on both sides. Co-operation in the *Una Sancta* movement is expressly granted by the highest authorities in the Church. It is particularly significant also as a reaction of the Catholic Church to the ecumenical movement. Of course, it is clearly distinguishable from it, if only by the fact that in full consistency with the Catholic point of view it must decline all organizational relationship to the other side. In the area of Christian thought the *Una Sancta* movement (which was preceded in the 'twenties by a "High Church Ecumenical Federation" with a periodical, "*Una Sancta*," the federation being proscribed for Catholics) may be considered at least indirectly as a fruit of the ecumenical movement.

3.

The unity granted to the ecumenical movement between its Stockholm and its Lausanne branch led to further organizational approach. In 1937 separate meetings were still held, the one at Oxford, the other in Edinburgh, but they were locally not far apart and in point of time one followed closely upon the other. The two conferences of 1937 (in which the German Evangelical Church was not permitted to participate officially because all official ecumenical relationships aroused the suspicion of the Third Reich) resolved to bring about the final amalgamation of the two branches in a single unity. Further preparations for that union were made during the subsequent years despite the intervening second World War, and it was finally consummated at the Amsterdam conference in 1948, when a permanent organization was set up.

Thus the World Council of Churches came into being. In German translation, it is called "Weltkirchenrat" or perhaps better "Oekumenischer Rat der Kirchen." Organizationally, the Council presents the usual picture of large international conferences that are intended to be permanent bodies. The Assembly, in which all member churches participate, meets every five years*; the central

*According to the *Christian Century* of May 9, 1951, the next meeting of the Assembly, which was due to be held in 1953 in Evanston, Ill., has been postponed to 1954. — Tr.

committee numbering 90 members meets annually. The Central Committee appoints an Executive Committee of twelve members to carry on the current activities of the Council. There is a permanent secretariat at Geneva, to which also are attached the ecumenical study commissions which do important research for the World Council.

The World Council of Churches is a world-wide organization of churches of various confessions. That distinguishes it from the great confessional world federations like the Lutheran World Federation, the Reformed World Federation, and the union of the Episcopalians in the Anglican Communion.

The organization of the World Council as a worldwide association of churches that are sovereign as to their faith and constitution has obviously been patterned after the great super-national associations of state, the Geneva League of Nations and the United Nations. That causes a host of serious problems. One might begin by asking whether an outer cloak beneath which unfortunately only too often the several states carry on their naked power politics represents an appropriate garment for the church. In this connection it must be emphasized that the supporting idea of the UN and that of the World Council are fundamentally different. In the former it is the thought of secular world peace, which, granting all the ideals behind it, in the last analysis is after all only a peace of this present world; whereas in the latter it is ultimately a religious striving for the *Una Sancta*, deeply anchored in the world beyond. All such scruples, which deserve to be seriously pondered, might perhaps be resolved by the observation that after all the external form as such is neither good nor bad, that at most it can only be either practical or impractical for the achievement of the desired goal. It can only be evaluated juridically, never ethically. And after all, it must be granted that in the search for a suitable form of organization for the World Council the example of the great super-national associations of states naturally suggested itself. For the church historian this discovery has nothing basically alarming about it, for the church has frequently borrowed elements of political constitutional law for its own constitutional development. In this respect the Roman Catholic Church reflects the *Imperium Romanum*, the German Evangelical territorial churches the German princely states of the 16th and 17th centuries, and the Anglican Communion the British Empire.

In fact, it may be maintained with a certain degree of assurance that in the strangely interwoven paths of the history of thought the organization of the World Council after the pattern of the League of Nations and the UN constitutes a return to original ecclesiastical forms. For the modern international conference admittedly has its origin in the medieval church council, at which—as for example at the council of Constance—ecclesiastical and political lines of interest frequently converged and cut across each other. Moreover, the modern idea of a

league of nations, which originated in Anglo-Saxon ideology, has a religious undertone. The initiator of both the Geneva League of Nations and of the present United Nations was in each case an American President; and ever since the Pilgrim Fathers in 1620 set up their body politic after the pattern of the patriarchs of the Old Testament as a covenant with God, the undertone of a holy, divinely willed and divinely blessed covenant vibrates in American democracy, whether national or super-national. This is the reason why the Americans take everything related to democracy so very seriously and promote it with a veritable religious zeal. Thus the World Council, too, contains the thought of the “covenant.” Its constitution—it would be imprudent to deny it—is at the same time a symbol of the victorious march that Anglo-Saxon thought has initiated during recent decades over large segments of the world. But it would be equally imprudent to take an unfavorable attitude toward the Council merely because it has adopted these constitutional features. For the constitutional form as such is neutral. It all depends upon how it is handled.

And right here, in the handling of it, the second difficult problem arises. It is self-evident that a world-embracing organization of over a hundred churches from all parts of the world must necessarily be concerned about what goes on in that world. This has been clearly evident in all the great ecumenical assemblies. They all stood somehow in the shadow of large-scale world politics. In 1937 the Germans were not permitted to go to Oxford and Edinburgh because the Third Reich would have nothing to do with western democracy in any of its forms. That, very likely, was the ultimate and deepest internal reason for the refusal of exit-permits, and not the status of the church struggle in Germany at the time. At the Amsterdam conference in 1948 the tension between East and West was clearly discernible.

Here everyone must make his own clearcut decision. One who holds the conviction that the church should keep itself aloof from all questions and problems that agitate the world at any given time and, in particular, who believe that it can hold itself aloof from them, must necessarily be opposed in principle to any kind of ecumenical church organization. The only course open to him is to strive for the unity of the *Una Sancta* by emphasizing the inner, spiritual relationship and avoiding any external, corporeal organization. This is a principle that must be recognized and against which, when consistently applied, no valid objection can be raised. But one who is convinced that the church does have something to say to the world is also obliged to provide a platform from which it can speak to the world, especially at a time when by reason of modern means of travel and modern systems of communication so many problems become world problems.

To be sure, the voice of Rome will always be able to function more promptly and more precisely than the voice of Geneva. That is due to the dogmatic principle underlying the Catholic constitution. An authoritarian organ-

ization ruled by an absolute supreme head who can make decisions at any time after consulting a few advisors who are always at hand, always functions more promptly than an associative organization cumbersome by its very nature. In the World Council a unanimous position with regard to many questions will never be achieved, with regard to others it can come only after a serious struggle. But all the greater must be the weight of those pronouncements that are really considered as the voice of all Christendom, especially when, as may well be conceivable, in any given case they agree in substance with the voice of Rome. This will be so, even though by no means all non-Roman Catholic churches are represented in the World Council. For some do hold back, partly for political reasons, like the churches in eastern lands, partly also for doctrinal reasons, like the American Lutherans of the Missouri Synod.

4.

Out of these circumstances there arises a further serious problem about the future of the World Council. What course of development must it take in order to meet the demands that will be made upon it? Among the materials submitted in preparation for the Amsterdam conference in 1948 there was a proposal of an Englishman, Kenneth G. Grubb, a leader in the ecumenical movement, who suggested an immediate co-ordination of the World Council with international diplomacy. For this purpose an office was to be established that would be comparable to that of the Cardinal-Secretary of the Roman curia, and in which all lines should converge. Representatives of the World Council were to be appointed to the UN and to the capitals of the world—ecumenical “nuntii,” as it were. There is no doubt that this proposal was a premature explosion, and very likely it was not even debated at Amsterdam. Nevertheless it is symptomatic of the future possibilities of World Council development. One who is opposed to letting the church concern itself about secular problems, even when they touch upon religious essentials, must shrink from that kind of development. But one who has taken the opposite position will have to admit that the kind of development as Grubb’s plan prematurely outlined it, or a similar one, must come some day. One cannot have a world organization standing in the midst of the world without at the same time employing certain means that are “worldly.” This does not mean that they would necessarily have to be used in a worldly sense.

A final serious question is the one concerning the continuation and the solidarity of the World Council. It is not a world-church but only a federation of churches. While the Roman Catholic cannot even raise the question of the continuation of his world-church, which (according to Catholic dogmatics) has been established by divine authority until the end of time—the very thought would mean for him a separation from his church—for the

Christian of the ecumenical group the World Council is purely the work of man. Its constitution is the product of laborious meetings of commissions and plenary sessions officially recorded in their minutes. Secular international law served largely as a pattern. History teaches that formerly the authors of constitutions and charters were fond of speaking of an “everlasting covenant,” but that no covenant has ever been everlasting. The World Council of course avoids designating itself “everlasting.” It is fully aware of its imperfections. To say the least, in a federation of sovereign churches who have the right to join and to withdraw, a certain fluctuation will be unavoidable.

Moreover, it must not be forgotten that the World Council is loaded with many tensions that agitate the secular world, though within the Council they appear in ecclesiastical form. Among them, for example, there is the problem of the younger churches striving for independence from their mother lands, so the mission churches sever their connection with the former mother church of the white man. Every world-embracing organization in Christendom is here confronted with one of the basic problems of the future.

Another difficulty is that of an ecumenical language. The Catholic Church has its modern church-Latin as a universal church language, and it is constantly being further developed. In the World Council German, English, French stand equally side by side. That makes for difficulties when a theological or juristic text is to be rendered exactly in the same sense. One can never say precisely the same thing in three different languages.

5.

All these are problems that are likely under certain circumstances to lead to serious discussions in the World Council. The Council as a human organization has no promise that it will endure forever. It is not “church” in the last and final sense; it aims only to be a way that will lead to it. But although the sober student of the World Council in all honesty will frankly admit this, it can be pointed out on the other hand that it has already passed through at least one acid test of its continuity. After the recent war there was much talk about the “collapse of international relationships.” But there certainly could not be any parallel talk about the “collapse of the World Council.” Quite the contrary! The first hands that were extended to us Germans again in our terrible isolation after the collapse of the Reich were the hands of the churches in other countries. And when we note that today, six years after that collapse, the first threads of German national life are being tied again with the outside world through representatives in foreign countries and memberships in organizations, we must gratefully point out that for the German Evangelical churches in the World Council this has long been nothing new. For years they have been taking their proper places as equal partners in the ecumenical organizations.

Institutional Devotions

John E. Meyer

From the 'outside looking in,' the religious devotion program of an institution such as a hospital, old folk's home, sanatorium or prison may seem quite peripheral. To those who are 'inside looking out,' the contrary is true: The devotional program is quite important, and quite central.

In order to truly appreciate the significance of the institution devotion, however, it seems that one must almost necessarily be institutionalized. I have been for some time and this article is written in the hope that one on the 'inside' can contribute something to the understanding of those on the 'outside.'

This will be an attempt to explore the great potential of the institution devotion both in the direct sense of what the devotion in itself can achieve and indirectly, as to how the devotion can lead the way to other potent ministering opportunities. Such an exploration, if it can be successfully accomplished, could vastly improve the caliber of institution devotions.

I believe the quality of the devotion is determined directly by the attitude the clergyman (or laymen in ever increasing numbers, has toward the importance and value of such devotions. In this respect, the devotion is no different from any other ministerial act. If a Pastor believes counseling is important, for instance, he will seek to improve his counseling ability and technique; those who believe the contrary will develop an attitude commensurate with their convictions.

On this premise then, that attitude toward the importance of the devotion and the extent of understanding of institutions and the institutionalized are the real causes of good or bad devotions, we might well attempt to more fully circumscribe the true dynamic of the institution devotion.

The subject is critical because the devotional practice of most of us, if we would be frank, leaves a great deal to be desired. Few of us would be willing to have our attitudes toward the occasional institution devotion held up to very close scrutiny; if our attitude is not one of actual antipathy, it is probably at best one of indifference. All too often we take the devotion for granted.

Many of the reasons why clergymen are remiss in this duty can be explained well enough, but the dereliction cannot be justified in the light of the significance of the institution devotion.

The busy clergyman, with more commitments than he can fit into his day, is inclined to consider institutional work strictly extracurricular at best, if not thoroughly superfluous! This state of mind, though not always involuntary, would seem to be occasioned by the minister's simple inability to give enough time to all the matters

that press for the hours in his day. All too frequently the preparation of devotions is put off to the last possible moment or allowed to depend entirely upon spontaneity with a shrug of the shoulders and the mental reservation 'I'll shake something out of my sleeve.' The result is almost certain to be poorly prepared devotions, if there is preparation at all, or a rehashing in a disjointed sort of way of something that we pulled out of the barrel.

As a beginning then, our conception of the occasional devotion ought to become one of manifestly greater respect. We must be through with the attitude that the institutions are preempting our time from more important tasks when they call upon us to 'bring a devotion.'

Nothing could be further from the truth! The institution is not only not unimportant, it indeed opens the door into a ministering opportunity fraught with spiritual and emotional potential unknown to any other situation. But until we believe this and act upon it, the chances are overwhelming that our devotional efforts will never achieve that degree of quality necessary to minister to the *entire personality* of the hearer.

Our devotions will begin to improve when we begin to sufficiently consider those who will hear our words. This is vitally important in institutional work and must necessarily affect our attitude toward devotion-preparation. We prepare our sermons with the people of our congregation in mind—their unique needs, their special weaknesses and strengths, their peculiar problems—and we attempt to deliver sermons that will be altogether proper. We want our sermons to strike home.

For the institutional worship, anything less than equal *listener-consideration* is not only psychologically foolish but spiritually dangerous. Perhaps it is not too temerarious to say that from the standpoint of adequate listener-consideration, the brief occasional institution devotion is even more important than the Sunday sermon.

The significant factor in this respect is the fact that institutionalized persons are seldom wholly 'normal.' Confinement in a hospital or sanatorium, incarceration in a prison, or even residence in an old people's home are not situations which come about as a matter of choice. This is important because it tells us something about the institutionalized.

It is of great import that we are touching these lives under circumstances which most of them have been forced to accept and which they hope will be temporary and short-lived. For some it is a time of real personal crisis, for others a time of great frustration, and for still others a time of keen soul-searching. More will be said in a later connection about the unique circumstances which are so inherent in institutional life. But for now suffice it

to say that institutionalized people are special people; they are special because they are adjusting to relatively unwanted circumstances. They must be helped in a special way.

Certain plain facts may give us direction. The listener's entire personality is our touch-stone in regard to listener-consideration.

The day is long over-due in which we realize that the *psychological impact* of our devotion is as important as, if not more important than, its spiritual achievement. Indeed, we should clearly understand that spiritual success of our efforts depends quite completely upon the psychological impression made upon the hearer. What we say may be only second-best to the way in which we say it.

A poorly prepared devotion, for instance, which clearly reveals that the speaker doesn't consider the whole matter very important, can drive a listener who already has a resentful attitude toward religion and the spiritual import of his situation more deeply into his resentment. One thing that becomes manifestly clear to anyone on the inside of an institution is that those who are confined therein soon develop a razor-sharp perception regarding those who seek to serve them. And this includes the clergyman with his devotional period. Those who seek to 'get by' with almost anything in the devotion are soon found out and nothing short of hostility and resentment in the minds of the hearers is the inevitable result. The very fact that one is confined to an institution is in itself reason enough for a person to develop a feeling of uselessness and isolation and woe to the clergyman who contributes to these vicious attitudes in his worship service!

Moreover, from the standpoint of a devotion's psychological impact, we must take cognizance of the therapeutic and mental hygiene values of the institutional devotion. These values are not necessarily in addition to the spiritual values, but rather interlocked and concomitant with the spiritual values.

The institutionalized should be helped to face their problems, large or small, and to work them through in an intelligent, unemotional way. The devotion can and should create an atmosphere in which the Holy Spirit will be able to work in men's lives. The issue, after all, is not whether the devotion is acceptable by any general standard of worship, but whether it is effective at the time and in the place it is delivered.

After all is said and done, the success of the devotion will depend upon its effect upon individual lives. If the devotion touches the individual's emotional needs, he will accept it and hold to it as though it were a breath of fresh air in a vacuum. Contrariwise, however, if the devotion is either too far over his head, too unrelated to his situation, or too simple and puerile, it will be heard and unheeded, at best, or completely ignored.

A simple suggestion may be in order. In order to achieve the meeting of hearts so essential to an effective worship service, the devotion should concern itself as far as possible, with those feelings, attitudes, problems, ten-

sions and aspirations which would be most common to the hearers.

By the same token, we must realize that the devotion which ignores the basic psychological values of worship is potentially dangerous.

To illustrate, a devotion delivered without a thought about the emotional needs of those who listen, may bog down into the sententious rut of authoritarianism and moralizing law and plunge the listener into morbidity and despair.

Other devotions which are prepared without adequate listener-consideration may contribute to the emotional tension of fear and anxiety. A worship service may well turn a patient's mind back in upon himself and increase the enigma of introspection, the most terrible poison that can flow in the blood stream of an institution.

Under the extremely important factor of adequate listener-consideration then, we should include first, the fact that the human personality is 'one entity' in nature. The effective devotion will aim itself at the listener's mind as well as his soul and will be designed to make the mutually complementary spiritual and psychological impressions.

The second factor to be included under listener-consideration are the *peculiar circumstances* of the institutionalized listener.

The general, sweeping, this-will-take-care-of-everything type of devotion simply isn't worth the time or effort. The same standard must guide us: The devotion must apply at the time and in the place it is delivered to be effective.

If our words are to apply, it follows then that we must take time to consider those circumstances which are present in every institution as well as those which are unique to particular institutions.

As mentioned earlier, in a somewhat different connection, a circumstance prevalent in virtually every institution is the dilemma of involuntary confinement. Add to this another typical institutional circumstance, the tediousness of time, and a genuine tension-producer may result.

It is just such circumstances which can guide us in preparing institutional worship programs. The possibilities are numerous: Consider, for instance, that institutionalized persons are all too prone to dwell on the disparaging aspects of their situation; a well prepared devotion can help give them insights into the meaning and creative aspects of the entire experience, and help them believe anew that all things do work together for good. They may spend too much of their time in preoccupation with self; the thoughtful use of Scripture can aid them in turning the focus of their attention outside themselves. Too much time can be spent in feeling sorry for themselves; an effective devotion can be a long step toward the elimination of false sentimentality from the situation and tears of remorse can be replaced with realistic understanding. Far too many devotions are sentimental and nothing else, leading the hearer to dwell upon his plight,

causing him to view his situation emotionally, making him see the negative instead of the positive and contributing unhappiness in small doses.

"Whatever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on *these things*." The properly prepared devotion can help confined persons make efficacious use of their time. If they are not helped to use it in a spiritually and practically positive way, the Satanic powers of despair and resentment will give them cause to use it negatively. We shall return to this shortly.

Another important factor common to every institutional situation which can show the way toward more significant devotions, are those circumstances which cause certain sins to be more prevalent among the institutionalized. Certainly, the sins most common to institutionalized persons will be the sins of the mind, and this simply because they are confined to a bed, or cell, or at best to a small contiguous area and rather completely separated from the 'outside world.' This is not to say that certain sins are completely foreign to institutions or that sins which are only 'thought out' are any less iniquitous, but it is to say that circumstances do have an influence upon which type of sin will be most troublesome to the confined.

"I am never bothered by the 'big' sins," remarked a fellow-patient, "it's the 'little' sins that keep cropping up in my mind that trouble me."

Another, referring to the devotions suggested: "I wish they would talk about particular sins and not just sin in general. My problem is that I keep repeating the same sins over and over again, and most of them are in my thoughts."

It is to such situations as these that the institutional devotion should speak.

But we must keep a watchful eye upon these circumstances which would probably be peculiar to certain institutions also.

To illustrate, we might consider the difference between the general circumstances at an acute hospital and a convalescent hospital or home. In the former the emotional tension of fear and anxiety would probably prevail, in the latter the predominant tensions would most likely be those of despair, resentment and impatience. In an acute hospital, the patient's chief concern may be an impending operation; in the convalescent hospital there are few operations, but there are long months of separation from home and family and long months without income. Both the operation and the separation are obvious tension-producers, but they are distinct in the emphasis they would elicit from a devotional period.

In the choice and application of Scripture, for instance, the actual circumstances which are characteristic of the institution are of corner-stone importance. Certainly, there are Scriptural truths which would cover virtually every emotional and spiritual need in a general way, and do so with some effect, but in the thoughtful application which should be an intrinsic part of the devotion, all

generalities, Scriptural and otherwise, should be cast aside.

These then, are some of the more important considerations which are prerequisites to a truly effective institution devotion. Listener-consideration must always be the standard by which we prepare the worship service, and its influence upon individual lives, the yardstick by which we may appraise its worth.

The entire achievement of the devotion need not necessarily be accomplished by the devotion as such, however; its most important product may appear in the form of an indirect derivative.

"He's talking about me, that's about the way I feel!," said a fellow-patient as we listened to the devotional service together one morning. We listened to the end and my friend went away with a good deal he could use.

It is just such initial 'spark of interest' that are the institution devotion's most significant achievement.

From the 'inside' it is abundantly evident that personal problems of every type are more prevalent among the institutionalized than among the unconfined. Of the 12 or 15 persons whom I have come to know well thus far during my confinement, each of them, without exception, was struggling, in varying degrees of intensity, with personal crisis-situations of the immediate past or present.

They run the gamut: marital difficulties, dissipation, loss of a loved one through death, disillusionment, frustration and a sense of spiritual estrangement.

But more than this, the institutionalized person seems to be more conscious of the fact that his life is somehow out of focus, and is more anxious, yes, more determined to find adjustment.

It follows then, that any spark of interest which the devotion may strike in a life is vitally important in the indirect sense of these things to which it may lead.

Briefly, three such indirect out-growths may be considered.

First, the devotion may guide the patient's thinking in the right direction. As suggested before, time can constitute a real problem in institutions, especially where quiet bodies tend to develop over-active minds. A devotion which helps a person stay his mind upon the power of Christ's Gospel for individual life-needs, may be the greatest single contribution to an efficacious use of the patient's time in achieving adjustment. Those insights into spiritual and emotional disturbances which, by grace, may occur in an individual's life, independent of outside help, may become a reality because a devotion has shown the way!

The point is this: a devotion which seeks and receives a reaction can well be the starting point for the Holy Spirit's activity.

Second, the devotion which impresses the patient and arouses this interest, establishes rapport. The clergyman and his devotion, after all, are the representatives of God and the Church. If the spark of confidence and trust can be aroused, the door may begin to open into a life, even if so very slightly.

Many institutionalized persons, not ready for a face-to-face discussion of their spiritual life, or their emotional troubles in a spiritual light, may be prepared for decisive personal work by the minister by a simple devotion.

The importance of rapport cannot be over-emphasized in the institution atmosphere. The person made amiable by a public worship service is one big step closer to accepting the Christian answer to his spiritual and emotional needs.

Third, the effective devotion will cause the patient to want more. This is very closely akin to the other two derivatives, but is different in that the patient may actually seek out religious guidance rather than passively wait for someone to come to him.

The patient may begin reading his Bible if he has not done so before, or if he has, he may read it more thoroughly and with a greater sense of purpose.

Mrs. J. K. had not read the Bible since childhood. After two months at a convalescent sanatorium, the speaker in her room was accidentally turned on by a chambermaid as she dusted. The devotion struck the patient as meaningful and helpful. Her first step was to read the Bible that lay on her bed-side table. Two weeks later she sought and received the counsel of a minister and is now a confirmed member of the Church.

It is, of course, impossible to foresee the pattern the patient's response to the devotion may take. It isn't important that this be done here. It is important, how-

ever, that we become fully conscious of the many significant possibilities which may evolve from the ordinary institution devotion.

Needless to say, institution worship is a great source of evangelistic opportunity, which in itself ought to greatly enhance our respect for it.

This exploration and tracing of the great opportunities that are inherent in institutional work, is certainly only a scratching of the surface. I have not attempted to completely define the field, nor do I presume that I have even touched all the important phases.

The motive has been only to present some of the abundant evidence, especially from the viewpoint of one who is institutionalized, which may justify my conviction that the institution devotion is a tremendously important ministering opportunity and an opportunity which we are, on the whole, seriously failing to exploit.

In order to do so, it seems to me, our superficial attitude toward the institution devotion must undergo a radical change.

Our devotions desperately need to improve!

Sufficient listener-consideration, in the preparation of devotions, both from the standpoint of the listeners' total personality and their peculiar circumstances, plus a greater respect for the psychological as well as the spiritual impact of the devotion, all of these placed in the context of the innumerable derivatives which may spring from the devotion, may lead to that improvement.

Preaching Today

Another Layman

I was rather intrigued by the article titled "We are Confused. . ." by a Layman in the March, 1951, issue of the *OUTLOOK*. This article should give all its readers considerable food for thought. I, personally, was particularly interested in the section of the article under the heading "Preaching Today" wherein we read:

"We are so confused because there is so little clear voice from the pulpit these days. Scripture has something to say about the trumpets that give an uncertain sound. Some of our present day preaching reminds one of Paul's 'sounding brass and tinkling cymbals'."

Always has it been true that the Church's seal is the quality, the working efficiency, produced in the rank and file of her membership, and that a minus in the pulpit will never evoke a plus in the pew! But what of a day like ours, when Christianity is challenging the great roaring world as never before, when the vision splendid of an evangelized earth fills our eyes, when an intensely aroused laity is springing to its feet? Was there ever a period when sane, sinewy, valorous, resourceful men were more needed in the ministry, large-hearted, large-thoughted men, men impatient of sham, men of iron

purpose, of self-denial, men who would have stood the Gideonic water test and been joined to the sifted three hundred; men ready to "lose their lives" for Christ's dear sake, cross-bearing men resolved to follow with steady, sturdy step where He leads them? Our times are clamorous for such, for only these will rally the army that will fight the battle and win the victory!

It is indeed cause for lamentation that too many occupy the exalted office of the ministry who through sheer laziness and dullness remain "cribb'd, cabined, and confined" within the rudiments of things, whose ideas are scant, whose sermons are cures for insomnia, dry as Homer's catalog of ships, or, changing figures, insipid concoctions like unto thin soup—five percent of solids distributed through ninety-five percent of water! Is the man of the street ever to be won by "talks"—that new-fangled abomination of a word—by "talks" that neither inform nor captivate, "talks" that are just drawl, drivel, and dribble, that spell muddle for the preacher and martyrdom for the congregation? If preachers would excel as masters in Israel, they should resolve that in the study they will be men and not dawdlers, that their

pulpit shall know the difference between pounding and expounding, that theirs shall be a teaching function, not a haranguing function, a noise-making function, or a windmill affair.

What forms a true sermon message? First, body, teaching quality. If there are to be listeners, there must be something worth listening to. Too often congregations are put off with medicated lozenges or "pep-talks" supposedly inspirational. The thing wanted is a renaissance of real Bible preaching. If the "logos" in Scripture is properly exploited, it will travel the gamut of human need. And there, along with topical homilies and verse texts, we are not to overlook the expository treatment of unitary, paragraphic passages. Thereby the people's interest in the Bible will be deepened and their knowledge of it increased.

Another property of a true sermonic message is that of arousing and holding an audience. A flat, leathern preacher is a nuisance! Why make dull what was meant to be breathless? Wordiness, befogged thinking, tame conventionalities, stilted platitudes can render a discourse a juiceless fizzle, nothing kindly about it; no salt, no seasoning, just babblement. Spurgeon thought that some ministers would make good martyrs—they were dry enough to burn well!

The last feature of a real message is that it has a definite purpose. A sermon is sometimes rated as "a good effort." An effort at what? If it is pressing toward a goal, it has the promise of profitable application. There are sermons that meander until quitting time and get nowhere. There are pulpit performances as remote from human needs as lectures on the politics of Mars. There are frosty discourses that leave everybody cold, as when it was reported of John Foster, a ministerial essayist of a former day, that his words "fell like icicles from his lips."

Confession is made of born inefficient mediocrities with a minus sign on their craniums, incapable of serious thinking. Confession is likewise made of the larger number who have become inoculated with the guilty microbe of indolence and are "sluggardized," to quote Shakespeare. These are they whose wits are on the wane as they grow older, whose arc of thought never widens, who get no further than "the outer skin of things," for whom are reserved dreary years of routine. As to their luckless flocks, Milton struck it when he wrote in "Lycidas"—"The hungry sheep look up and are not fed." Weaklings can be seduced into "speaking smooth things," trimming the positives of the Gospel. Those also of "double heart" will do the same. Fancy a compromise gesture of this kind: "Brethren, if you do not repent, as it were, and be converted, in a measure, you will be damned to some extent." Not only should there be barefisted rejection of vitiated utterance like that; there should be an unbroken and unbreakable belief that faithful preaching will win men from their past selves and lead them to their spiritual destiny as heirs of God.

Inevitably, all reading and reflection converge toward the sermon, creating fertility and perhaps brilliance of resource. The fermentation of a well-stocked mind and a mind alive make possible luminous moments, the intuitive flash, the penetrative glimpse; make possible trains of suggestion coming at one in pelting haste; make possible, therefore, preaching with freshness, force and fire.

Contrast with these pulpits filled with "little" men of early promise, perhaps, but who have starved themselves by loitering and have slipped into the slough of mediocrity, there to stay. "The prophets shall become wind," said Jeremiah, and here they are! They are literary bankrupts and they have lost the will to think. They deal with texts like a fly crawling over an apple, going over it, round it, but never getting into it. At best they are the slaves of yesterdays's ideas, and even these they must beat the bush to flush out! Occasionally they seem on the point of saying something of their own, but they never quite hit it. Their sermons are blighted with a blasting of mildew, are "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought," differing one from another by delicate shades of monotony. Sometimes there is the device of a screamy discourse, where the preacher, with nervous explosions, with bellowing like a strong bull of Bashan, seeks to get past the ventilation of real thought! Of course, with those of average intelligence, to say nothing of the cultured, the device is transparent. Robert Louis Stevenson saw through it, and had an unbounded contempt for those who, as he says, "try to cover their absence of matter by an unwholesome vitality of delivery."

What of worshipers thus condemned to weekly disappointments? They may pardon violations of the mechanics of composition; they may pardon broken-backed homilies scrambled together under the orderings of an upside-down logic; but what of sermons that are a garbled hash of prosy generalities, sermons with a modicum of grain lost in a pile of chaff, sermons with no provision for those craving spiritual food and guidance? The alternatives for the membership of afflicted congregations are either sticking it out in a duteous spirit of sublime forbearance or finding relief by a determined exodus!

There are through the length and breath of the Church of Christ congregations that are cursed with preaching in which ideas are reduced to homeopathic doses, preaching which is merely a fortuitous concourse of remarks, preaching that has the quality of thin tea, preaching long on platitudes and short on amplitudes and altitudes, voluminous at times but never luminous. Not thus will ministers trifle with pulpit opportunity when it is burned in upon them that they are in debt to those whom they face!

Emerson, in his Cambridge oration on "The American Scholar," speaks of the clergy as "always, more universally than any other class, the scholars of their day." There are intruders among us who belie that statement, who are living blunders, their sermons the fifth essence of dreariness, with no textual health in them, a perpetual drizzle of vapid exhortation. Such are among us. We

are reminded of Bottom's answer in the play when Snug, the joiner, asked if the lion's part was yet written: "No, it can be done extempore, for it is only roaring."

It is to be lamented that there is sorry work among

those set apart as ambassadors of the Kingdom, set apart as "stewards of the mysteries of God." Let them hearken diligently to the Jeremiah oracle: "He that hath My Word, let him speak My Word faithfully."

Our Spiritual Home

G. Nordberg

God has provided a home for His children upon earth. He has not left his people to wander about like blind men fumbling along a stone wall vainly seeking the protection and security. His children are not bewildered waifs that may be picked up by the first worldly institution that offers some semblance of comfort and safety.

This our spiritual home is not a mere temporary abode. In the days of the old dispensation the chosen people, rescued from the bondage in Egypt, pitched their tents in the wilderness and built the tabernacle as a place of worship according to the blue prints given them by revelation. This house of worship was transferable from place to place for which reason the material and the design had to conform to certain definite specifications. It was erected, taken down, and moved by the hand of man.

The New Testament structure is a permanent home built of "living stones" by divine power, a spiritual house, eventually to be merged with "the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands," eternal in the heavens.

The home God has provided for His own is the local Christian church. The foundation of this building was laid in the fulness of time, the Son of God Himself being the chief cornerstone, and the keystone or closer above the high altar was put in place on Pentecost when the Holy Spirit descended upon the group of disciples. The Christian congregation is, therefore, a heaven-born institution permeated by the Spirit who ever remains the governing principle and guide in all its activities. In this home God is the Father and executive, Christ is the host and housekeeper, and the Holy Spirit is the bond of unity and interpreter of things divine. Here we as Christians are children in a home, members of a family, and fellow-workers in a household.

To this home we come for instruction and guidance in the Word, for access to the sources of regenerative power in the sacraments, for food and sustenance at the Lord's table, for refreshing and stimulating communion with people of like minds, and for the joy of cooperative effort and shared labor in the fellowship of the household.

This house of God is our refuge in times of trouble, our resting place amid stress and strain, the sanctuary which admits us into the very presence of the Most High, and

the antechamber to the life beyond for "I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever." In this place we experience a sublime sense of security, we have conscious feeling of being entirely "at home."

The Congregation is Holy

This institution is holy, not only by virtue of its origin, but by virtue of its very nature. Again by comparison, the temple, the vestments, and the vessels of the Old Testament became holy by dedication and anointment, but the local congregation of the New Testament era is holy because it is the body of Christ. All the prophecies and all the symbolism of the preparatory dispensation are fully realized and perfected in Christ and His Church. The church is holy because God is holy. As the sun is present in every beam of light emanating from it, so the saving glory of the triune God is present in every congregation where Christians worship. "Surely God is in this place,—this is none other but the house of God."

This holiness does not pertain primarily to the house of worship with its equipment, nor to the priesthood or clergy officiating at the worship, nor to the apparel and ritual garments of those serving before the altar, although both the place and the persons are set apart and sanctified for a sacred purpose, but the holiness of the church refers to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the membership that constitutes the body of Christ. The priesthood of believers is an elect and holy group.

At this point someone will probably interrupt and say, this sounds well enough in theory but in our modern realistic world these principles must be toned down to conform to concrete situations. How can we maintain this doctrine when the indifferent bystander and the voluble critic are hurling epithets like hypocritical, sanctimonious, and pharisaical at the members of the local church?

In the face of such carping, unfavorable judgment some are ready to rescind the doctrine of holiness as applied to the congregation. They are willing to admit that the local church has many weak spots, that it is really in a bad way, but behold our synod, our denomination, our international body, there we have greatness and glory and divine approval. Some go even farther and claim that

holiness is a concept which can only be attributed to another concept, namely the assembly of all believers or the communion of saints. All of these would like to reduce the church to an abstraction in order to ascribe to it respect and glory.

But this is surely evading the issue. There was no such abstraction in the early history of the Church. The Christian Church came into being as a concrete entity localized as to place and numerically estimated as to membership. From this mother church went forth the band of messengers that spread the gospel into the Graeco-Roman world. And at every place where people received the message in faith and became obedient to the Holy Spirit groups of Christians were formed. By the establishment of congregations the kingdom of God steadily pushed out its boundaries. The extension of the reign of Christ upon earth is a historical process in which every new increment is a holy unit sanctified by the Spirit.

The holiness of the church does not depend upon the holiness of the members. The sequence is reversed. The Spirit of God, issuing from the Head of the Church, is distributed in all members thus joining Christ and His Church in one holy unity. This bond of unity supplies daily grace to wipe out sin from the stricken conscience and power to overcome evil in times of temptation. Born of the Spirit, regenerated and sanctified, the members truly belong to the communion of saints.

But what about the finger of scorn which, in contrast to all that can be said about the holiness of the church, still remains pointed at the hypocritical church member and the sanctimonious deacon. It would be preposterous to maintain that all members of the external organization are thereby also members of the body of Christ. By opposing the will of God and resisting His Spirit many have alienated themselves from the body, and have fallen prey to the allurements of the world. As blood relationship in a family can be established only by birth so the children in our spiritual home are individuals who are born of the Father through grace in Christ and remain subject to the leadership and discipline of the Holy Ghost. But the fact that there are unregenerate individuals in the organized group does not render void, nor even diminish the holiness of the church. In any field of wheat there may be tares among the wheat, but it is still by its very nature a wheat field. There is no need in this connection to fall back upon the old distinction between the visible and invisible church, for the local congregation is visible as an objective and active manifestation of God's kingdom upon earth.

The Congregation is Independent

When we speak of "free churches" we do not mean freedom from civil authority, for in our country that is guaranteed by the constitution; nor do we refer to freedom from doctrinal subscription, for the independent churches do not claim the right to formulate their own creed apart from other groups; nor do we imply freedom

from collective responsibility, for the Christian spirit is not solitary but cooperative. The liberty of the churches consists in freedom from ecclesiastical control and interference. The congregation is autonomous and fully capable of directing its own affairs under guidance of the Spirit of God. It has no need of control and domination from outside, be it synod or denomination, be it bishop or pope. No external authority has any right to impose its power upon the church of Christ. Such external organizations are secondary factors through which the work of the churches is implemented; They are human ordinances quite indispensable and justified. They function as bonds between the individual groups and as channels for cooperative enterprise.

There is no evidence of any super-church organization existing in the apostolic age. To recognize that such authority prevailed at that time leads us back to Roman ecclesiastical polity. The meeting of the apostles and elders at Jerusalem (Acts 15), which at times has been designated a church council in order to impute to it some official authority of judgment and some power to issue ex-cathedra pronouncements, was not composed of individuals who had been elected as voting members from the congregations then in existence. It was more a congregational meeting than a council. The result of the deliberations is significantly expressed in the terms, "Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders with the whole church. . . for it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us."

The autonomy of the congregation does not mean that each separate unit is self-sufficient, nor self-sustaining. Since all the gifts of grace are not delegated to any single church, it follows that enterprise of great complexity and scope are beyond the capacity of the individual units. Only cooperative efforts can initiate and carry on the common functions which demand special gifts for leadership, special aptitude for teaching, and special attainment in scholarship. Christian responsibility finds its finest expression in shared fellowship of labor just as worship finds its finest expression in rejoicing concerning the fruits of common activity.

Few local churches have the power to sustain their own representative on the mission field, although this is an ideal arrangement for larger congregations which effectively stimulates interest and responsibility in the evangelization project. The work of Christian education can be carried on by a solitary congregation only within certain limits; but when efforts are pooled the various types of qualifications, endowments, and aptitudes with which the church has been blessed can be utilized for the edification of the saints. This same practical principle can be applied to other Christian activities, f. ex. charity work and social service.

However, there is an affinity between the churches, a bond of union which expresses itself both materially and spiritually. The early Christians felt constrained to come to the rescue of fellow believers in other communities in times of distress and hardship. The ingathering of funds

for the relief of suffering in other localities was a characteristic manifestation of this bond of union. But more important is the spiritual encouragement that comes to congregations in turn in the form of testimony and song by brothers in the faith who recognize the responsibility of "having gifts differing according to the grace that has been given." The fellowship of believers expands to embrace those in need, materially or spiritually.

The Congregation is a Working Unit

In a well ordered home every member has a share in the responsibilities of the household. Very early the children are taught to find their place in the group and assume some task for which they can reasonably be held accountable. Thus all members, adults and children, have separate and unique duties according to inclination, energy, attainment and training.

The home is not a boarding house in which a few are hired to do the work while the others may pay for exemption from duties. Those who come and go by arrangement with the household are outsiders who do not belong to the home. This "boarding house" concept can not be applied to the church with any more consistency than it can be to the home. But the analogy may at least throw some light upon the oft repeated question, can a person be a Christian without belonging to any church? Under ordinary circumstances, it seems incredible that a child would run away from his home. His safety, his well-being, his whole life is tied up to the abode of his parents. At home he feels a sense of belonging which he can not

experience at any other place. It is natural and normal to remain at home. Even so with the Christian. There is something unnatural and abnormal about a person who maintains he is a Christian but shuns his spiritual home.

The local church is our home under God. It is the working unit of the kingdom of God upon earth. Here we are engaged in a cooperative enterprise to proclaim the gospel at home and abroad. The church is not primarily a mission field to be evangelized by the pastor in charge. Certainly there are some, perhaps many, who need to be aroused from spiritual slumber that Christ may shine forth through them. Members of the external organization need the preaching of repentance and grace. May that candlestick of Luther never be removed from our pulpits.

However, by its very nature the church is the basis of operation for the Christianizing of the world. Every member has a function to perform in this great task. The Spirit of God dedicates the potentialities, the aptitudes, the talents, and the skills of the individual member in the interest of the purpose for which the church exists.

Every child in God's family has been born with certain natural gifts and capacities. In the church under guidance of the Spirit such possibilities have been nurtured and developed. In this same church every member should find "my task." The personality we have, the capacities we possess can not be realized to the extent God has destined except through the holy influence of our spiritual home. Our usefulness, our happiness depends upon the functioning of our God-given talents in the interest of the Kingdom of God.

LETTERS

Liturgics Again

Sir:

This morning's mail brought the *Lutheran Outlook*. I read your editorial on "Liturgics Again." At once I felt the urge to read the article by the Rev. W. F. Hertel.

Reaction: at first I was amused, then I wondered whither we are drifting, and then I was angered. Form may beautify the services and help to edify the congregation; but surely some are overdoing a good thing. And in this case not only form is involved, but doctrine. Let us stay with the Lutheran simplicity.

I am edified and benefited much by the *Outlook*. The May number is very good. I hope ways will be found to continue this publication in the future.

Greetings from a like-minded brother.

B. R., Paige, Texas

Sir:

I again want to assure you that you are a man after my own heart. I admire your courage. You are not afraid to stick out your neck. You hew to the line and

let the chips fall where they may. More power to you in fighting High Churchism.

W. N. E., Dayton, Ohio

Sir:

I have just read the recent main editorial in the *Lutheran Outlook* on "Liturgics Again." You are to be commended for the refreshing point of view. The question ought to be put more frequently why liturgically minded people love to go back to those centuries of Christian history for liturgical material when spiritual life was at low ebb.

A. G., St. Louis, Mo.

Sir:

I have always appreciated the *Outlook*, above any other Lutheran publication I receive, and I strongly hope it is able to remain in existence. Your editorials, even though I find myself disagreeing with you on Liturgics and MacArthur, are first-class.

J. E. M., San Antonio, Texas

Preachers and Preaching

Sir:

I wish to submit the following quotations.

Some years ago an article appeared in *The Country Home* magazine, written by Dr. Frederick K. Stamm and titled, "Millions of Backsliders." He wrote in part as follows:

"The decline of the rural and city church in the last decade is one of the gravest problems of our day. . . A lot of preachers contend that people don't go to church because of Sunday movies, Sunday baseball, and the automobile. But my vast (radio) congregation tells me this isn't true. My listeners say that the *first* real reason for people's not going to church is *poor preaching*. I hate to say this, but it is a fact. I get hundreds of letters about it from people living on farms and in small villages. They tell me they are tired of being bored by meaningless drivel, and that they won't drive five or ten miles each Sunday just to suffer—or sleep! The music is bad, they say, and *the sermons are out of date*."

Dr. George Mechlenburg of Minneapolis, Minn., also writes on the subject, as follows:

"Over a period of several years I have interviewed one thousand people who do not attend church regularly. . . These people told me that they were ashamed that they did not attend church. They knew that they ought to attend. But when I got closer to the *real* reason for not attending they would usually say to me: 'We have real problems. Modern life is terrific to such as we are. Sometimes we do not know where to turn. The Church, however, does not seem to understand us. We go to church and we hear about Noah and Moses and vague explanations of religious theories and we fall asleep under it. The Church is not interesting. We need someone who will explain to us politics, finance, social life, and personal life. We need someone who will explain to us the danger of sin as we find it in modern life. We are longing for a warless world, but we do not feel that the Church has any voice in international politics. We don't find what we need in the Church.'"

"Now this was in effect the composite answer of a thousand people, ordinary people, poor people, the general run of the people in our land. Yes, these people would attend church provided something practical and humanly interesting were going on. They would attend church if they could find something there to make them happier and better fit to fight the battles of the day. *The simple, honest fact is that millions of people have become disappointed and discouraged with the dry and uninteresting program of the average church.*

"Are our pews empty? It is because we are not heralding a new heaven and a new earth to the masses. It is because we are *not* marching forward. We die when we are 'at ease in Zion'."

J. F. P., Isle, Minn.

Cold Churches

Sir:

I am not much on using words, so I will get right to the point of my letter. I have been in the service nine months now. Eight months of that time was spent in Texas where I attended many Lutheran churches in the large and small towns around Wichita Falls. In all of them I received the same cold treatment. They don't even say as much as hello, or try to make you feel as though you were wanted.

I have talked to other servicemen who have been stationed in various parts of the country and the situation seems to be the same everywhere a serviceman goes. I have even heard civilians who have gone to a strange town and attended a Lutheran church say that the greeting or atmosphere was cold. There were no introductions or handshakes or invitation to come again.

To me, the friendly handshake, introduction and the invitation to come back are the things that would make you feel like these are the kind of people you would like to worship with.

Also, the Lutheran churches do not provide a place for servicemen to have Christian fellowship on week nights.

Maybe someone there could write this into a much better story and try to awaken Lutheran congregations all over the country to the picture GI's, and civilians as well, are getting of the Lutheran Church.

I know of one church in Ft. Worth where the pastor brought this subject out in a sermon after hearing several people remark about the coldness of his church. It seemed to wake the congregation, because on my second visit to the church the people made me feel welcome and want to go back again.

I know this is poorly written, but I think you will see the point I have tried to bring out, and I hope there is something that can be done about it.

J. B., Pfc., Chanute Air Force Base, Ill.

What is the Word?

Sir:

In partial corroboration of Pastor Neve's emphasis I quote from Dr. Herman Preus' book, "The Communion of Saints": "The most emphatic visible sign of the Church is the Gospel; and I speak not concerning the written, but the spoken Gospel." (Preus is quoting Luther). "God has decreed that no one shall or can believe or receive the Holy Ghost unless the Gospel is preached by word of mouth. It is the spoken Word which is the life-giving power in the church and therefore is a true mark of the Church. When the Word of God goes forth from a believing mouth, then it is a living Word, which can save men from death, forgive their sins, and lift them into heaven." (Preus, H. P., *The Communion of Saints*, Augsburg Pub. Co., Minneapolis, 1948.)

However, Pastor Neve is confused in his assumption that Luther therefore considers the written Word inferior to the preached Word, or that Luther because of his emphasis on preaching does not consider the Bible to be verbally inspired.

We preach the Gospel. This involves properly dividing God's Word into Law and Gospel. This preached Word is indeed a living Word. True, not everything in the Bible is Law or Gospel. Some is prophecy, some is history, and some is simple divine counsel (e.g., Proverbs). The Bible contains the Law and the Gospel. Correct. But does this justify Pastor Neve's assumption that therefore the Word of God is only contained in the Bible

when it contains also the other values mentioned above? Are these not also part of the inspired Word of God?

Lutheran doctrine has always maintained that to hold that the Bible merely contains the Word of God and that certain passages in it (and who is qualified to assort these passages?) are not inspired, is *heresy*. Pastor Neve's recurring articles on the subject of the Word have continually held to the line of Grundtvig and the Lundsian school. Pastor Neve asserts that these do not reject the written Word. True, but they do not trust implicitly in its authority, for not all its passages are considered by them to be the Word of God.

I ask the question whether we would not need a pope of some sort if not every part of the Bible is inspired, for otherwise who would tell us which passages we can trust and those which are not to be trusted? Someone would one day tell us that John 3:16 is *not* one of the inspired passages.

Pastor Neve's articles have little or no impact on

American Lutheranism. They toy with an age-old phenomenon, the inspiration of the Scriptures, in which faithful Lutheran pastors trust, and from which trust they cannot be deterred by the fantasies of someone who is so evidently unable to understand inspiration.

R. M. J., Callender, Iowa

Sir:

Here is something worth passing on:

Dr. James Tudor Fisher, the famous Los Angeles psychiatrist, comes to this conclusion in his book, "A Few Buttons Missing": "If you were to take the sum total of all the authoritative articles ever written by the most qualified of psychologists and psychiatrists, if you were to take the whole of the meat and none of the parsley, and if you were to have these unadulterated bits of pure scientific knowledge concisely expressed by the most capable of the living poets, you would have an awkward and incomplete summation of the Sermon on the Mount."

W. F. H., Sacramento, Cal.

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News of the Churches

Augustana Lutherans Push Union Moves

Galesburg, Ill. — The Augustana Lutheran Church holding its 92nd annual synod here, authorized its committee on Lutheran unity to continue "the study and exploration with other unity committees" of a proposed merger of Lutheran groups belonging to the American Lutheran Conference.

Other bodies involved in the union negotiations are the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the American Lutheran Church, the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the Lutheran Free Church.

The synod also instructed its committee to prepare recommendations for consideration at the convention next year "as to the possibility and advisability of participation of the Augustana Church in the proposed merger."

If the contemplated union is consummated, it would result in the formation of the largest Lutheran church body in America, with a baptized membership of 2,079,359, according to 1949 statistics of the groups involved.

Not content with this move, however, the synod adopted a supplemental resolution reiterating its desire for a unity which would embrace all of the eight bodies participating in the National Lutheran Council.

To explore the possibilities of such a large merger, which would include 4,000,000 baptized members, or two-thirds of all Lutherans in America, the Augustana committee on unity was instructed to hold discussions with the various National Lutheran Council bodies and to include the results of such conversations in the committee's report to next year's synod.

Augustana Lutheran Church Names New Head

Galesburg, Ill. — Dr. Oscar A. Benson of Worcester, Mass., for ten years vice-president of the Augustana Lutheran Church, was elected president at its 92nd annual synod here.

He succeeds Dr. P. O. Bersell, who for 16 years has held the presidency, but was not eligible for reelection because of a constitutional age limitation.

To fill two years of Dr. Benson's unexpired term as vice-president, the synod elected Dr. Malvin H. Lundeen of Ottumwa, Iowa, president of the Iowa Conference.

Dr. Benson, who is 60, was president of the Illinois Conference until two years ago when he resigned that post to accept a call to Trinity Lutheran church of Worcester. Last year he was chosen president of the American Lutheran Council.

Prior to Dr. Benson's election, the delegates rejected a proposed amendment to the Church's constitution which would have limited presidential tenure to two successive terms of four years each. The amendment, which was adopted by the synod last year, required a two-thirds vote this year to become effective. The vote here was 203 to 193.

Missouri Synod Reports Gains

St Louis — Baptized membership in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod reached a total of 1,810,953 last year, according to the Church's annual statistical report issued at headquarters here.

The report, prepared by the Rev. Armin Schroeder, head of the Synod's statistical office, showed that the communicant membership in 1950 reached an all-time high of 1,211,254.

Reception of 70,934 new communicant members gave the body a net gain for the year of 37,945. This was an increase of 2.7 per cent over the 1949 total.

Of the new communicants, 44,254 were received from outside the Lutheran Church, while 26,680 were "gains from within" the Missouri Synod or from sister synods. "Gains from within" resulted from the confirmation of children whose parents were members of the Missouri Synod.

The report stated that 697 members had left the Missouri Synod to join the Roman Catholic Church, while 3,061 converts were gained from Catholicism.

Evangelical Lutherans Show Membership Gains

Minneapolis, Minn. — The Evangelical Lutheran Church gained 27,657 members in 1950, bringing its total baptized membership to 841,494, it was announced here by Dr. A. J. Bergsaker, secretary.

Confirmed members, which increased 15,437 during the year, now number 592,058. The percentage increases dur-

ing 1950 are 3.4 for baptized membership and 2.68 for confirmed membership.

The Southern Minnesota district grew the most, adding 5,537 members. Greatest proportionate increases were reported in the Rocky Mountain, Pacific and South Dakota districts.

Minnesota Lutherans Back University Officials

Onamia, Minn. — The regents and the president of the University of Minnesota were commended by the Minnesota district of the American Lutheran Church "for the fact that the Christian spirit is still prevalent on the campus."

Evidence of this fact, it said, is the continued activity of the Lutheran Student Association and similar groups.

The Lutherans asked the university to "refrain from engaging faculty members who would undermine Christianity in their classrooms." They said that "the Church and the State must cooperate in character-building as shown in world history for the welfare of Church and State."

A Minneapolis lawyer, William L. Sholes, has obtained a court order directing the regents of the university to halt the use of its facilities for religious activities or to show cause why they will not do so.

In petitioning for the order, Mr. Sholes charged that the school has "officially sponsored and aided a program of denominational Sectarianism on the campus."

Lutheran Deaconesses Hold National Meeting

Philadelphia — The garbed and communal life of the Lutheran deaconess makes possible a unique Christian service that could not be supplanted in the Church by a more secular type of women's work, it was emphasized at the national meeting of the Lutheran Deaconess Conference of America here.

The Church needs more of them, said Sister Anna Elbert, directress of the Philadelphia Motherhouse of the United Lutheran Church, and president of the Conference, in which ten Lutheran bodies are represented.

"The garb is a convenience and is less expensive than civilian dress," she

said, "but this should not be the paramount purpose for wearing it. It should be a witness to eternal values.

"In a poll taken recently of Philadelphia sisters, 69 out of a total of 78 voted to retain the present economic system. Whenever deaconesses discuss the communal economic plan, the majority prefer no change. It provides a network of bondedness, the members of the community carrying one another in bonds of love, prayer, and support."

The ten Conference institutions reported 112 women in training—compared to 80 two years ago—and 312 deaconesses currently in active service.

Reflecting the need for more recruits, Sister Anna observed: "These 317 serve a territory of 10,900 parishes, with nearly 6,000,000 communicants. If there were one deaconess for every 2,000 persons, we would need 2,975 deaconesses. If we set our goal as high as the Church of Finland, we would need 10,894 of them."

Sister Anna recalled that motherhouses were established in the beginning by individuals or groups apart from the organized Church, and did not for years "permeate the organized Church." She noted that this position had changed and said that "the diaconate will benefit over the years in direct proportion to its ability to serve the Church."

Sister Olive Cullenberg, of Omaha, was elected president of the conference to succeed Sister Anna Ebert. Sister Anna Bergeland, of Minneapolis, was elected vice-president, succeeding the Rev. George Vollmer, of Milwaukee. Sister Catherine Neuhardt, of Baltimore, was reelected secretary-treasurer.

Seventy-five delegates represented the following motherhouses: Philadelphia and Baltimore, of the United Lutheran Church; Valparaiso, Ind., of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod; Milwaukee, American Lutheran Church; Brooklyn and Chicago, Evangelical Lutheran Church; Minneapolis, Lutheran Free Church; Omaha and Axtell, Neb., Augustana Lutheran Church; and Brush, Colorado, Danish Synod.

Lutheran Free Church To Explore Union

Seattle, Wash. — The Lutheran Free Church, at its annual meeting here, voted to create a "standing committee on church relations" to explore the possibilities of union with other member bodies of the American Lutheran Conference.

Approval of the plan was given after a four hour debate, but it was emphasized that the action "does not in any

way commit this Church to organic union."

Dr. T. O. Burntvedt, Minneapolis, was reelected president of the Church. The Rev. C. J. Carlson, Minneapolis, was reelected vice-president and the Rev. Forrest Monson, Grand Forks, N. D., secretary.

Finnish Lutherans Approve Altar, Pulpit Fellowship

Minneapolis, Minn. — The Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church of America also known as the Suomi Synod, went on record here in favor of the establishment of altar and pulpit fellowship with the Finnish National Evangelical Lutheran Church "wherever possible."

The recommendation for fellowship was made by a joint steering committee of the two Finnish bodies, which thus far have been kept apart by differences in doctrine.

The Suomi Synod has some 30,000 members and belongs to the National Lutheran Council. The National Evangelical Lutheran Church has about 15,000 members and is in close relationship with the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.

Lutheran Synod Warns Against Mixed Marriages

Brooklyn, N. Y. — A warning against mixed marriages, "especially marriages with Roman Catholics," was issued by the United Lutheran Synod of New York at its annual meeting here.

The body urged pastors to "hold conferences with young people of marriageable age at least once a year in order to advise them on marriage with Catholics." It also voted to publish a pamphlet for congregation distribution "which sets forth with meat and weight the proper attitude which our young people should take in the matter of mixed marriages."

N. J. Lutherans to Form State-Wide Welfare Association

Atlantic City, N. J. — Formation of a state-wide unified Lutheran Welfare Association was approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of New Jersey at its first annual convention here.

The proposed organization would own and operate Lutheran orphanages, homes for the aged, family service and other welfare agencies throughout New Jersey. Part of the directive body of the association would be named by the synod.

Before approving the creation of the welfare group, delegates turned down a motion to have the synod itself own the welfare agencies and institutions, operating them through its regular budget

Lutherans Hit 'Commercialism' in Churches

Brooklyn N. Y. — A resolution criticizing the raising of money for congregational support through "dubious methods" was adopted by the United Lutheran Synod of New York at its annual convention here. Methods cited were church suppers, bazaars, card games, and dances.

The resolution asked the United Lutheran Church in America to caution its congregations throughout the nation against "commercialism" which, it said, "is eating like a cancer into the vital organs of the Church, causing spiritual paralysis and nullifying the very purpose of the Church's existence."

Profit-making efforts are "evasions of giving," the resolution asserted, "and carrying on God's work by schemes and rackets is irreverent and disgraceful. A congregation can prosper spiritually only when the conduct of its financial affairs is in conformity with the expressed will of God."

Penna. Lutheran Synods Agree on Boundaries

Philadelphia — After years of deliberation and debate, the Pennsylvania Ministerium and the Central Pennsylvania Synod—the two largest of the United Lutheran Church in America—voted to unscramble their geographical puzzle.

Their concerted action calls for a boundary division, where none existed before, with the Ministerium taking all churches in the eastern part of Pennsylvania and the Central Synod, headquarters of which are in Harrisburg, taking central and part of western Pennsylvania.

It will mean the exchange of about 150 pastors and congregations, to be effected at the 1953 synodical conventions, and for some of them the relinquishment of affiliations they have had for more than a century. Several large Philadelphia churches, which were part of the old Evangelical Lutheran Synod of East Pennsylvania (one of four to unite in the Central Synod 14 years ago) will be among those transferring to the Ministerium, which is centered here.

Lutherans Stress Fund Raising by 'Sacrificial Giving'

Atlantic City, N. J. — Members of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of New Jersey were urged here to discourage money-making enterprises in their churches and to raise funds for the church support only by "sacrificial giving."

The recommendation was made in a resolution adopted at the first annual meeting of the synod, which was organized last year.

"The work of the Lord in the New Jersey Synod shall be supported humbly by the principle of sacrificial giving," the resolution said, "and all worldly and secular practices not reflecting the principles of Christian giving shall be discouraged."

"Further, it is the sense of this synod that its congregations be encouraged to use only the principles of Divine Stewardship in the support of the Church."

Lutheran Synod Warns Pastors on Open Communion

Brooklyn, N. Y. — A warning to its pastors against extending an "open invitation" to Communion services was issued by the United Lutheran Synod of New York at its annual convention here.

"As long as there are basic differences still dividing the Church, which arise out of a genuine concern for the truth," an adopted statement said, "it is a pretense to express a unity at the altar which does not, in fact, exist."

The statement, presented as a "guide" to pastors and congregations, declared that a major reason for "the divisions which plague the Church of Christ," lay in "the various interpretations of the Holy Communion held by the several branches of the Church."

While emphasizing that "the practice of closed Communion" was not advocated, the synod cautioned that "other than the invitation which the liturgy itself proclaims, it is difficult to envision any open invitation which is not either too inclusive or too exclusive."

Lutheran Stewardship Offices Plan Joint Meeting

Springfield, O. — Stewardship offices of the United Lutheran Church in America and the American Lutheran Church will hold a joint conference for the first time in 1952.

The joint meeting was approved here by the annual stewardship conference of the United Lutheran Church.

The Rev. George Schultz, steward-

ship secretary of the American Lutheran Church, said: "Our programs of stewardship promotion have been so similar that it seems appropriate that we should meet together to share ideas and problems."

Henry Endress, ULCA stewardship secretary and executive director of the Lutheran Laymen's Movement, said the joint conference marks the culmination of a trend in which the two groups have been using virtually the same methods in workshop planning, printed materials and films, and the training of pastors and laymen in stewardship.

Bishop Salomies Named Primate of Finnish Church

Helsinki — Bishop Ilmari Johannes Salomies of Mikkeli was named Archbishop and Primate of the Finnish State Lutheran Church by President Paasikivi. He succeeds Archbishop Aleski E. Lehtonen, who died in March.

In a radio address immediately following his appointment, Archbishop Salomies expressed hope that the Church would strengthen its spiritual life. He especially stressed the importance of the work of pastors in small parishes.

He also emphasized the need for the Church increasingly to understand the social needs of the people and to help meet those needs.

German Lutheran Head Decries Niemoeller Statements

Rostock, Soviet Zone, Germany — Bishop Hans Meiser declared here that relations between the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany (VELKD) and the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKID) had been "heavily burdened" by Pastor Martin Niemoeller's utterances on German rearmament.

Bishop Meiser, who is chairman of VELKD, spoke at the opening of the Church's General Synod, attended by delegates from East and West Germany.

He said that Pastor Niemoeller's public statements had made it imperative to stress "restraint" by VELKD officials with regard to political and party issues.

Bishop Meiser's reference was to a declaration on VELKD's attitude toward politics which has been drafted by a special committee of theologians set up last December. The statement is scheduled to be issued by the next Lutheran bishop's conference.

Discussions at the Synod meeting centered chiefly on a number of theological issues, including questions of bap-

tism, confirmation and a unified liturgy.

Bishop Meiser recalled the resolution passed by the bishops' conference last year condemning the proclamation of the dogma of the blessed Virgin's Assumption by the Roman Catholic Church. He hailed the "widespread and strong endorsement the resolution has found among Protestants."

Sweden Liberalizes Status of Non-Lutheran Churches

Stockholm — A freedom of religion law, the first of its kind since the Lutheran Church became the established Church in the 16th Century, was enacted here by Parliament. The law, which will become effective Jan. 1, 1952, liberalizes the status of both the Free Churches and the Roman Catholic Church in Sweden.

Although freedom of worship has been practised in Sweden, the new law was framed to meet the objectives of non-Lutheran groups who claimed they suffered many civil disadvantages because of the lack of freedom of religion law.

One of the main provisions of the law permits a person to leave the State Church without having to join any other denomination. Those who have reached eighteen years of age, the law states, may now leave the State Church after having filed their intention with their registrar's office.

It explains that children automatically become members of the State Church at birth, "provided one or both parents belong to it, unless they announce that they do not wish to have their child a member." After the age of fifteen, it is necessary for the child to give personal consent to his withdrawal from the State Church.

The law also recognizes the right of members of all creeds to hold public office. A constitutional provision stating that members of the government must belong to "the pure Evangelical faith" has been preliminarily abolished. Even teachers of religion in State schools need no longer be members of the State Church.

In order to become valid this section of the law must be approved by Parliament after the 1952 general elections.

Another important provision of the law recognizes marriages performed by non-Lutheran clergy as having the same legal status as State Church or civil marriages.

A proposal calling for a compulsory civil wedding, followed by a voluntary church ceremony, was approved by the Lower House but not by the Upper one, and was thus defeated.

Convents and monasteries may now be established if the government grants permission. Lifting of the ban against such institutions, which have been forbidden in Sweden since the reformation, followed a lengthy debate in Parliament.

The new law is being greeted here with satisfaction although it is generally recognized to be a compromise measure which will be revised and extended as time goes on.

Approve Resumption of Activities by German Missionaries

Berlin — Resumption of activities by German missionaries was approved by the Commission on World Missions of the Lutheran World Federation at the meeting held in Breklum, Schleswig-Holstein.

The meeting was presided over by Dr. Fredrik A. Schiotz, of New York, executive secretary of the Commission on Younger Churches and Orphaned Missions of the National Lutheran Council.

It was agreed that German missionaries should resume work in their former missionary areas, and that German missionaries should be sent to Tanganyika, East Africa, as soon as the British government grants entry permits.

Following the presentation of reports on LWF missionary fields, the meeting urged Lutheran missions to promote the formation of independent young churches in missionary areas.

The Commission recommended also that missionary activities in Japan and New Guinea be increased to meet the "great demand" for missionaries and teachers in those areas.

Communists Capture Slovak Lutheran Church

Vienna — The Lutheran Church of Slovakia has been placed under Communist leadership with the appointment of Prof. Jan Chudoba as new senior Bishop of the Church.

He replaces Bishop Vladimir Cibrda, who was dismissed recently and whose present whereabouts are unknown. Church sources here said that Bishop Cibrda had for a long time opposed the misuse of the Lutheran Church for political purposes.

The announcement of Prof. Chudoba's appointment was made by Lidove Noviny, Czech Communist paper, which stated that he "was elected at a recent general convention of the Lutheran Church in Bratislava.

Prof. Chudoba teaches at the new State-controlled Evangelical Theologi-

cal Faculty in Bratislava. He is known as a leftist of long standing and a Communist Party member.

A second Lutheran bishop also has been eliminated from the Church leadership, it was learned. He is Bishop Fedor Ruppeldt of Bratislava, head of the Church's Western Diocese. There are only two bishops in the Slovak Lutheran Church.

The General Inspector of the Church, Peter Zatko, has been replaced by a Communist.

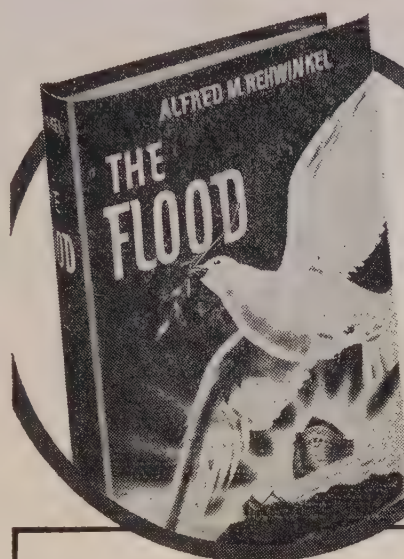
Church circles here expressed fear that a purge of prominent Slovak Lutheran clergy and laymen would follow the leadership changes.

Episcopalians Bar Church Council Membership over Creedal Issue

Providence, R. I. — The Rhode Island Episcopal Convention voted here, in effect, to have no relationship with the new Rhode Island State Council of Churches.

The new council has been criticized by some Episcopal clergy for its lack of a constitutional statement on the divinity of Christ similar to that in the preamble to the constitution of the National Council of Churches.

The Episcopal Convention, which last year voted to seek affiliate membership in the council, adopted the follow-



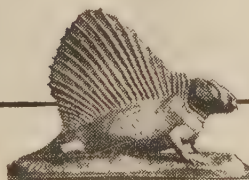
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ing report of the committee named to negotiate the affiliation:

"After careful conference and consideration the committee to negotiate affiliate membership with the Rhode Island State Council of Churches reports to convention that this diocese, at this time, is not in a position to approve of any relationship with the Rhode Island State Council of Churches.

Be it resolved that the proposed affiliate membership in the Rhode Island State Council of Churches be tabled."

Defends Witnesses Stand Against Blood Transfusions

Minneapolis, Minn. — The stand of Jehovah's Witnesses against blood transfusion—dramatized in the recent case of a new-born Chicago girl—was defended here by one of the sect's leaders at an eight-state district assembly.

"The Bible says no intake of blood," said Milton G. Henschel, Brooklyn, N. Y., a director of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society.

He referred to the case of Cheryl Labrenz, who suffered a blood condition doctors said would be fatal if a transfusion were denied. The baby's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Darrell Labrenz, both Jehovah's Witnesses, refused to permit a transfusion.

A Chicago family court judge issued an unprecedented order appointing a temporary guardian over the child. The guardian ordered the transfusion and the child lived.

"There is no proof that the child would have died," Mr. Henschel said. "The case is not closed. The parents will appeal to the United States Supreme Court."

He quoted the Bible, Leviticus 17:14: "Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh: for the life of all flesh is the blood thereof: whosoever eateth it shall be cut off."

Mr. Henschel pointed out that Jehovah's Witnesses believe in medicine, including surgery.

"It is only when it involves the intake of blood that we cease believing in medicine," he said.

"If a parent hasn't the right to decide what shall happen to his children," he added, "it is almost as bad here as it was in Nazi Germany or is in Russia."

Conferees Agree to Put COs Under Control of Draft Boards

Washington, D. C. — Legislation to place conscientious objectors under the control of their local draft boards and to empower these boards to order COs to perform work that will contribute

to the national health, safety or interest has been tentatively agreed upon by House and Senate conferees who are working out a compromise draft bill.

The House version of the draft act would continue the present deferment of religious objectors. The measure passed by the Senate, however, would have required COs to perform "work of national importance under civilian direction" as they did during World War II.

The compromise reached by the conferees is still subject to action by both Houses of Congress before it becomes law.

As communicated to Religious News Service by a member of the conference committee the compromise language will be as follows:

"If found conscientiously opposed ... to such noncombatant service ... he shall in lieu of such induction be ordered by his local draft board to perform such civilian work contributing to the national health, safety or interest as the local board may deem appropriate and each person who knowingly fails or neglects to obey any such order of his local board shall be deemed for the purpose of section 12 of this title to have knowingly failed or neglected to perform a duty required of him under this title."

Section 12 of the proposed bill provides jail sentences of up to five years for wilful refusal to obey its provisions.

News of the compromise drew a mixed reaction from representatives of the historic peace Churches and other groups interested in the welfare of conscientious objectors.

A. Stauffer Curry, executive of the National Service Board for Religious Objectors, said "there appears to be a clear disposition on the part of the Senate to be more liberal in regard to COs than was the case in World War II."

"There is certainly a desire to get away from Civilian Public Service and all of its evils, and we feel that is to the good," he said, after conferring with representatives of the various denominations represented on the NSBRO.

"However, the question will immediately arise as to what constitutes work in the national interest.

"Does that mean that if an objector is ordered to go into a defense plant, he will have to go whether it is against his conscience to make munitions of war or not?"

Mr. Curry said that local draft boards already exhibit a wide variance of attitudes toward those claiming religious objection to war. He said that some kind of procedure for appeals would seem to be needed lest cases of discrimination in the treatment of objectors arise.

Another question, he said, which

ought to be answered in the bill Congress passes is how long an objector is to remain under the control of his draft board.

Apparently, as the wording now stands," he said, "an objector would be under the control of his draft board as to his occupation and mode of livelihood from the time he is 18 until he is 26 while another section of the bill suggests that it could even be extended to the age of 35.

"We hope that the conferees will work out these questions before reporting the bill back to the floor of the respective Houses."

Anglicans Reject Proposed Inquiry on Freemasonry

London — A proposal to set up a committee "to inquire whether the theological implications of Freemasonry are compatible with the Christian faith" was rejected by the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury.

The proposal urged Dr. Geoffrey Francis Fisher, Archbishop of Canterbury, to establish the committee so that members of the Church of England might be given authoritative "guidance" in regard to Freemasonry.

Another topic at the meeting concerned relations between the Anglican Church and the British Free Churches.

Dr. Fisher told the delegates that while the Church of England seeks friendly relations with other Churches "nothing has been done which conflicts with loyalty to our own traditions" and "no one proposes to betray Anglican principles."

House Committee Exempts Church Papers from Postal Increase

Washington, D. C. — A 60 per cent increase in second class mailing rates was voted by the House post office and civil service committee. But the committee agreed to exempt publications of churches, religious organizations, schools, and other non-profit institutions from the increase.

The committee's action will have to be ratified by both the House and Senate before it becomes law.

Meanwhile, in testimony before the Senate postoffice committee Postmaster General Jesse M. Donaldson continued to press for a straight 100 per cent increase on all second class mailing rates.

He said that "any publication that would be driven into bankruptcy merely by an increase in its mailing rate must already be close to the line."

Scottish Presbyterians Censure Elizabeth's Visit to Pope

Edinburgh — A protest has been made to King George by the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland against the recent visit of Princess Elizabeth to Pope Pius XII at the Vatican Palace. The protest, which was directed also against the visit paid to the Pope by Princess Margaret Rose in 1949, was contained in a letter addressed to the King by the denomination's synod at its annual meeting here.

The Rev. James MacLeod, of Greenock, told the meeting that Princess Elizabeth's visit to the Pope was "contrary to the Constitution, as laid down in the Act of 1689."

He was supported by another speaker, the Rev. J. P. McQueen, who asked: "Who authorized Princess Elizabeth to dress like a Roman Catholic woman, who authorized her to dress like a nun? Why did the princess and her husband stand on the floor, while the Pope stood on a raised platform? It means that the Pope is higher than Her Royal Highness, that he is above all princes."

It was announced that a prompt formal acknowledgment of the Synod's letter had been received from King George.

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Church Membership Passes 84 Million Mark

Nashville, Tenn. — American church membership has passed the 84 million mark, according to the 1951 Southern Baptist Handbook, released here.

Porter Routh, editor of the Handbook, reported that the nation's churches gained in membership last year from 81,497,698 to 84,000,775. This represents a 3.1 per cent increase for the second successive year, and brings the church membership to 56 per cent of the total United States population.

Fifty Protestant groups with a membership of more than 50,000 each reported a total of 48,554,954 members, compared with 47,199,675 in 1949. The Roman Catholic Church reported 27,766,141, compared with 26,718,343 the previous year. The balance includes Jewish congregations, Polish National Catholic and Orthodox Churches, Buddhist and Spiritualist groups, and smaller religious bodies.

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UMT Opponents Win Victory

Washington, D. C. — Religious groups opposed to permanent universal military training won a major victory here when Senate conferees on the draft and military manpower bill agreed to drop their fight for the adoption of

permanent UMT in the present legislation.

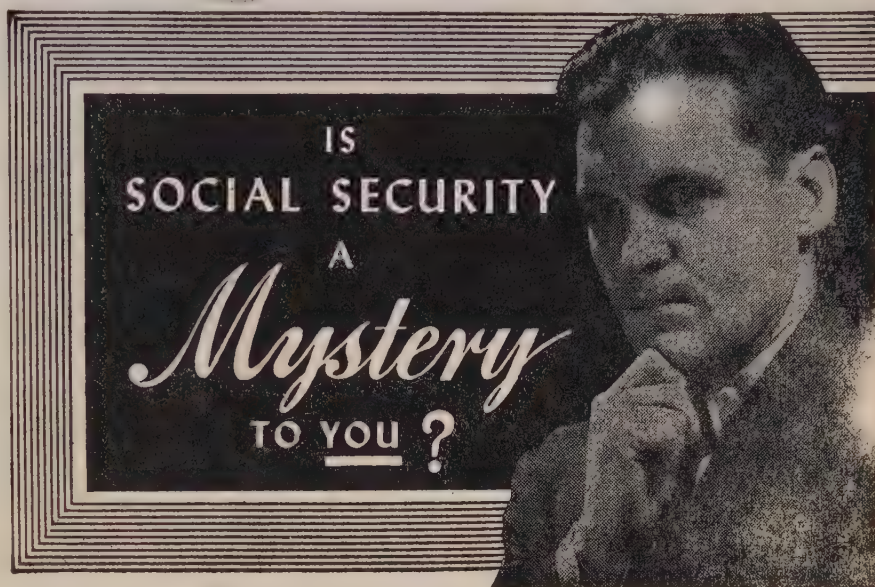
However, proponents of UMT immediately began a new attack that promises to bring a fresh test on the issue within a few months.

Under the compromise agreement the Senate conferees acceded with a few minor changes to the House bill provision for the establishment of a civilian commission on military training to conduct further study on the UMT question.

As the issue now stands Congress will have to pass specific legislation establishing UMT before the program can be adopted.

But Sen. Richard Russell (D.-Ga.), chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, and Rep. Carl Vinson (D.-Ga.), chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, said they expect to have legislation prepared within six months to authorize six months of military training for all boys reaching the age of 18.

It was learned, meanwhile, that the armed forces will push for a full year of training. In any event, the UMT program will not go into effect while 18½-year-old boys are being drafted for combat service, as they will be for the duration of the present emergency under the new draft act.



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Military leaders want Congress to approve the UMT program so that it can be set up and held in reserve for the time when the President will authorize it by directive. The enabling legislation which the military forces seek would be permanent. That is, it would not expire with the cessation of the present emergency, nor even with the cessation of hostilities in a third world war, should one break out.

Presbyterians Seek to Modify Divorce Regulations

Cincinnati — Delegates to the 163rd General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. acted here to modify the denominations strict stand on marriage and divorce.

They adopted a report which recommended that the remarriage of a divorced person be allowed "when sufficient penitence for sin and failure is evidenced, and a firm purpose and endeavor after Christian marriage is demonstrated."

At present, the Church's Confession of Faith provides that "nothing but adultery, or such willful desertion as can no way be remedied by the Church or civil magistrate is cause of dissolving the bond of marriage."

Another section of the report advised ministers against marrying divorced persons whose Churches prohibit such marriages.

"In the interests of Christian comity," it said, "ministers are advised not to unite in marriage a member of any other Christian communion whose marriage is known to the minister to be prohibited by the laws of the Church to which such person holds membership, unless the minister believes that his refusal would do injustice."

The report also provided for the establishment of a Committee on Christian Marriage in each presbytery to aid and counsel the clergy.

Miss. Churches Pray for Rain

Jackson, Miss. — Prayers for rain were recited in Mississippi churches following a suggestion of Governor Fielding L. Wright and Commissioner of Agriculture Si Corley.

A forty-one day drought in this dominantly agricultural state reached a climax with record temperatures of 102 degrees. However, scattered showers brought some relief a few hours after the official's appeal.

Churches of a number of denominations responded to the suggestion for prayers. Some had already held or planned special prayer services.

"We need rain as perhaps our state has never needed it before," the statement by Governor Wright and Mr. Corley said. "Our crops are drying up, our pasturelands are parching. Ruin and hardship may face us if we do not get rain—and soon.

"We feel that only God himself controls our destiny and at this time, when we find ourselves and our economy endangered by a circumstance over which we have no control, we should turn to Him.

"Therefore, we are suggesting to the people of this state, and to the clergy, if they will permit, that our people as they gather in the churches on Sunday, offer a prayer that the emergency which faces us be lifted, if it is God's will."

Congress Passes Aid to India Bill

Washington, D. C. — Congress put its stamp of approval on legislation extending \$190,000,000 in emergency food aid to India.

Strongly supported by religious groups the bill was approved by a substantial majority in both houses after four months of consideration.

An amendment to the bill, designed to encourage the sending of additional relief by private groups, directs the Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA) to pay ocean shipping cost to India of all relief packages and supplies donated by American religious and voluntary organizations.

The bill also provides a scholarship program for Indian students to be financed out of the interest payments India makes on the loan, but limits the program to only \$5,000,000.

Under this program the State Department is authorized to bring Indian students, professors, and technicians to this country for special training, and to send American students and teachers to India on similar scholarships.

Funds also will be available to send books, laboratory equipment, and other educational material to India. Though aimed primarily at helping India improve its agriculture, this program will not be limited to this field.

New Mexico Bars Garbed Teachers from Public Schools

Santa Fe, N.M.—The state board of education announced here that it had adopted a new policy of banning all Roman Catholic nuns, brothers and priests wearing religious garb from teaching in the public schools.

The board also declared it to be a policy not to rent any building owned

by a religious group for public school purposes except under "exceptional circumstances."

These actions were taken after Assistant Attorney General Phil Dunleavy asked a statement of the board's attitude in connection with the so-called Dixon case, in which a group of Protestants seek to bar religious influence from the public schools.

The case is now pending in the state supreme court. Mr. Dunleavy sought a statement of the board's policy before writing a brief which the attorney general's office was to file with the court.

The state board, in a resolution, said that its new policy was adopted on the advice of the attorney general's office.

"It is hereby resolved and adopted as the policy of this board," the resolution stated, "that all nuns, brothers, or priests of the Catholic Church, or members of any other sectarian religious group, wearing clothing of religious significance, should be removed from the public schools throughout the state as expeditiously as circumstances in each locality allows; and, it is further adopted as the policy of this board that insofar as possible no property owned by religious groups shall be leased or rented by the state from such religious or sectarian organizations unless exceptional circumstances require such action."

Urge Interracial Lutheran Church in Washington

Washington D. C. — Establishment of an interracial Lutheran church in the nation's capital has been recommended by the Lutheran Ministerial Association of the District of Columbia.

In a resolution adopted at a special meeting, the all-white ministerial group expressed regret that Lutheran churches are not doing more to reach the large proportion of Washington's population that is Negro.

The ministers recommended that several Lutheran churches which are contemplating removal to new locations because of population shifts consider the possibility of continuing work at their present locations on an interracial basis.

The recommendation was based on a three-month study undertaken by a committee of Washington Lutheran leaders. The study found that about 60 per cent of the Negroes in Washington do not attend any church.

Although the preponderant majority of Negro church membership in the capital city is Methodist and Baptist, the Roman Catholic and Protestant Episcopal Churches have had "marked success" in winning Negro members, it was reported.

In their resolution the Lutheran pastors also recommended that Negroes be invited to membership in the National Lutheran Chorus, the Lutheran Laymen's Fellowship and other city-wide Lutheran organizations.

—o—

Protestants Predict Senate Battle Over Vatican Minister

Washington, D. C. — Protestant leaders here predicted a stiff battle in the Senate over confirmation of a regular diplomatic envoy to the Vatican should President Truman nominate one.

The President told his regular press conference that he has such a plan in mind.

Asked whether he expected to appoint a successor to Myron Taylor as personal representative to the Holy See, the President replied that he did not, but that he was giving consideration to the matter of naming a regular Minister to the Vatican.

Mr. Truman was asked if this would be a regular diplomatic mission, such as the nation sends to sovereign governments which it recognizes. The President said that it would be.

An immediate protest came from Dr. Joseph M. Dawson, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, which represents the four major Baptist Conventions of the country.

Dr. Dawson said he was glad that the President had decided to terminate the position of "personal representative" at the Vatican, which Protestant have regarded as illegal, and to bring any future representation at the Vatican in line with regular constitutional procedure. But he expressed dismay that the President had chosen to bring up such a divisive question at this time.

"I'm glad that the President is studying the whole question" said Dr. Dawson. "I realize that he is under strong pressure from Roman Catholics to appoint a successor to Taylor and from Protestants who oppose an appointment.

"It is exceedingly unfortunate, however, that this question comes up at a time when the nation needs unity. There is no more divisive question that could arise in the life of our nation than this."

"If it does come," he warned, "it is time to settle it desively. The mistakes which Presidents Roosevelt and Truman have made with respect to appeasing the Communists, for which such a sorrowful harvest must now be reaped, must not be repeated in efforts to appease another totalitarian power, even if it be an ecclesiastical one."

Dr. Glenn L. Archer, executive secretary of Protestants and Other Amer-

icans United for Separation of Church and State, said that in considering extending official diplomatic recognition to the Vatican, the President will want to consider several problems.

Among these, he said, is whether recognition of the Vatican as a sovereign power would require all agents of the Roman Catholic church to register under the Foreign Agents Registration Act.

The President should also consider, he said, whether such a relationship would violate the First Amendment of the Constitution, and whether it would be diplomatically wise in a predominantly non-Catholic country to single out one Church for such special recognition.

Chaplaincy System Inaugurated For Minn. Mental Hospitals

St. Paul, Minn. — Appointment of seven clergmen as fulltime resident chaplains in Minnesota's mental hospital system has been announced by Governor Luther W. Youngdahl.

They are the first of a group that in time will number 18 men, or two chaplains for each of the nine institutions, and represent a new phase of the governor's mental health program.

The number of chaplains from each denomination or faith has been determined by a study of the religious affiliations of state hospital patients, Carl J. Jackson, director of the division of public institutions, said. It revealed

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Paul C. Empie, Ex. Director, National Lutheran Council.

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that about one-third of the patients are Roman Catholics; one-third are Lutherans and the balance other Protestants and Jews.

Appointments were made on the recommendation of a chaplains' advisory committee, which is responsible for screening of candidates and establishing standards and training.

Chaplains are required to be regularly ordained pastors endorsed by the denomination they represent. They must have college and seminary background.

Each chaplain is required to obtain nine months of clinical training during the first two years of service, with a minimum of three months of such training to be completed prior to assignment.

In addition to the normal pastoral and clinical duties involved in resident chaplaincy work, the chaplains will be responsible for encouraging and coordinating the volunteer and part-time services of clergymen and religious groups from the communities in which the hospitals are located.

World Bodies Name 'Ambassador To East Asian Churches

Whitby, Ont. — Dr. Rajah B. Manikam of Nagpur, India, was named "roving ambassador" to Protestant churches in East Asia at a joint meeting here of representatives of the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council.

Dr. Manikam, a member of the South Andhra Lutheran Church, is executive secretary of the National Christian Council of India and Pakistan.

Appointment of a special representative to East Asian churches was approved last December by the Conference of East Asian churches which met in Bangkok, Thailand.

Communist Leader Praises Pastor Niemoeller

Berlin — Deputy Premier Nuschke of the (Eastern) German Democratic Republic lauded Pastor Martin Niemoeller here as a "courageous clerical fighter for peace who has clearly recognized which way Germany has to go."

Mr. Nuschke spoke at the opening ceremonies of the (Communist) "All German Peace Congress" in East Berlin.

Josef Plojhar, Minister of Health in Czechoslovakia, and a suspended priest, also praised Pastor Niemoeller for his recent utterances denouncing German remilitarization proposals. He called the clergyman's remarks "a spectacu-

lar evidence of the growing progressive attitude in the West."

Mr. Plojhar was recently named an honorary member of the East German Christian Democratic Union.

Meanwhile, in Dortmund, Pastor Niemoeller was reported to have reiterated earlier demands for a "strict German neutrality between East and West."

"There is only one possibility for Germany to solve her security problem," he said, "namely to do everything suited to prevent that Germany will get involved in a new war or give cause to an East-West armament race."

"A remilitarization of Germany for security reasons is completely senseless," Pastor Niemoeller said, "because this would not change a thing with regard to the power constellation of East and West."

In Duesseldorf, Evangelical delegates of Northrhine Westphalia to the Lower House of Parliament adopted a resolution which expressed regret "that Pastor Niemoeller and other men of the Confessional Church have turned, without theological necessity, a political issue into a disputed argument within the Evangelical Church."



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Dibelius Warns Churches on Arms Issue

Berlin — The State alone has the duty and responsibility of assuring the safety of citizens, and churches "should not interfere" with measures for this purpose, Dr. Otto Dibelius, Evangelical Bishop of Berlin, told the congregation at a Reformation service in St. Mary's church here.

His remarks were generally considered a reply to recent statements by Pastor Martin Niemoeller criticizing reported remilitarization plans in Western Germany.

"The Church, however," Bishop Dibelius said, "reserves the right to raise its voice if the State exceeds its limits and if men are misused."

The bishop, who is chairman of the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany counseled against a general fear of war, declaring that "all tyranny and half of all wars are the result of fear."

"If it is God's will that we go through another war," he said, "people will be equally unsafe in Berlin, Bordeaux, New York, and Moscow."

"While refraining from commenting upon the State's security measures, we must warn against too much reliance on their efficiency because the real security lies in God alone."

LWA Passes One-Third Mark As Gifts Top One Million

New York — (NLC) — More than one-third of the 1951 Lutheran World Action goal of \$3,300,000 has been received at headquarters of National Lutheran Council here, it was reported by Dr. Paul C. Empie, executive director of the Council. On June 28 receipts totaled \$1,193,756.14 or 36.1 per cent.

Dr. Otto Dageforede to Join NLC's Division of Welfare

New York — (NLC) — The Rev. Dr. Otto H. Dagefoerde of Toledo, Ohio, member of Am. Luth. Church has accepted appointment as a full-time consultant field worker in the Division of Welfare of the National Lutheran Council. He is 49 years of age and graduated from Capital University and Theological Seminary at Columbus, Ohio.

For the past 17 years, Dr. Dagefoerde has been executive director of the Lutheran Welfare Service of Northwestern Ohio. He will assume his new post on Sept. 1, but for the present will continue to live in Toledo.

As one of the four consultants in the NLC's Welfare Division, Dr. Dagefoerde will visit Lutheran welfare agencies and institutions in the interest of their

program, public relations, financing, and standards of work.

A major assignment will be the development of Lutheran Welfare Councils in various states. He will also consult with the state Departments of Welfare to interpret the programs of Lutheran agencies and establish closer working relations with other community welfare services.

UELC Asks Council Undertake Mission Work Among Indians

Westbrook, Me. — (NLC) — Mission work among the American Indians as a cooperative activity under the Division of American Missions of the National Lutheran Council will be recommended by the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, according to action taken at its 55th annual convention here, June 19-24.

In its resolution, the UELC indicated that it would transfer the administration of its Cherokee Indian Mission at Oaks, Oklahoma, to such a department if and when it is organized.

Delegates gave approval to the 1951 Lutheran World Action goal of \$3,300,000. Pastor Girtz reported that the UELC had raised \$8,596 or 24.3 per cent of its quota of \$35,270, as of June 1.

H. J. Hansen, Blair, Nebr., layman, was re-elected treasurer of the Church, and the Rev. P. C. Jensen, also of Blair, as statistician. J. A. Rasmussen, Los

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Angeles, Calif. and M. A. Sweet, Westbrook, Me., were again named to the Church Council. All other officers of the Church are hold-overs.

Action on plans for the reorganization of the UELC's home missions program, which would put all home missions on synodical basis, was deferred until next year to permit the various districts of the Church to consider the proposals.

A budget of \$171,241.60 was adopted for 1951-52 and tentatively also for 1951-53.

Next year's convention will be held at Albert Lea, Minnesota.

Lutheran Missionary is First On Scene of Plane Tragedy

Monrovia, Liberia — (NLC) — A Lutheran missionary was the first to reach the charred wreckage of a Pan American 4-engined Constellation in which forty persons lost their lives when the plane crashed near here on June 22 during a rainy season flight from Johannesburg, South Africa, to New York.

The missionary, the Rev. Gordon Lindemann, is located at Sonoyea, one of the seven mission stations in Liberia of the United Lutheran Church in America. The tragedy occurred about four miles from Sonoyea, and Pastor Lindemann made his way through bush grass and undergrowth to reach the scene.

He found burned bodies and wreckage strewn over a hillside 1,600 feet high, close to the St. Paul River, about 50 miles northeast of this Liberian capital. There were no survivors among the 31 passengers and nine crewmen on the plane.

A rescue party brought the bodies of the victims to Sonoyea. Because of the rapid decomposition that sets in this climate, burial of the bodies was authorized at the village, a collection of about 300 huts of the Buzies and Kpelah tribesmen who inhabit the area.

Among the clergymen who conducted burial rites was the Rev. L. T. Bowers of the ULCA mission at Totota, about 15 miles from Sonoyea. He had been notified of the tragedy on the intercom radio system which is operated between the mission stations. Memorial services for the dead were held on June 24.

Another ULCA missionary, the Rev. R. D. Homrighausen, who is located at Parakwelle, far out in the wilderness, is reported to have sent news of the crash to Pan American officials at Roberts Field at Monrovia. It is believed that he picked up the message on the radio and relayed it to the authorities, but this report could not be confirmed.

Latvian Harpist Plays In New Jersey Orchestra

New York — (NLC) — Mrs. Karl Miller, a former displaced person now resettled in East Orange, N. J., is making a name for herself as a harpist, continuing a career that was interrupted when she had to flee from her home in Latvia during World War II.

A year after she arrived in the United States with her husband and two sons, Mrs. Miller has become harpist with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra. She is also in demand to play concerts at clubs and churches in many New Jersey cities.

Mrs. Miller was a harpist with the Latvian National Opera in Riga, where her husband was a prominent lawyer. She plays a Lyon and Healy harp, made in Chicago by the firm said to make the world's finest harps. Although the family had to leave their other belongings behind when they fled from communists, Mrs. Miller took the harp with her.

The Miller family was sponsored by the First Lutheran Church in East Orange, where the Rev. Luther Anderson is pastor. Mr. Miller works in the maintenance department of a Bloomfield, N. J., factory. The two boys are in school and hope eventually to attend college.

Six Churches-in-Exile Sign Agreement With Bavarian Church

Geneva — (NLC) — An agreement has been reached whereby members of six Lutheran churches-in-exile in the German province of Bavaria will be considered members also of the Bavarian Lutheran Church.

Churches represented in the agreement, signed June 13, are the Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Hungarian and Ukrainian Lutheran churches-in-exile. The Bavarian Church now takes the responsibility for the spiritual ministry to these people, granting them the same rights and duties as its other members.

Where there are members of the exiled churches in sufficient numbers, special groups are to be organized and linguistic and other traditions will be respected to the fullest possible extent. Pastors of the exiled churches may be taken over by the Bavarian Church temporarily or possibly, as the need arises, as full time pastors.

IRO Makes Grant to LWF-SR For Special Emigration Plan

Geneva — (NLC) — The International Refugee Organization (IRO) has allocated \$8,000 to the Lutheran World Federation Service to Refugees in or-



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der to assist in special emigration Belgium.

LWF-SR is at work helping DP's who went to Belgium immediately after the war to work in the mines and who, although they were considered resettled, have not been able to find permanent homes there. From 40 to 50 families, some of whom have been able to save some money and will only require partial aid, will be given assurances from Canada and the U. S. and assisted in finding new homes overseas.

Some \$20,000 has already been spent by LWF-SR from its own sources to help the permanent resettlement of these people.

Southern Cal. Welfare Council Sets Up Lutheran Blood Bank

Los Angeles — (NLC) — A blood bank has been established here by the Lutheran Welfare Council of Southern California to provide a source of blood when needed by members of Lutheran churches in the area.

According to Frederick A. Smith, executive secretary of the Welfare Council, many calls from pastors have been received during the past several years concerning possible sources of blood that was needed immediately. In the majority of cases, he said, the cost of blood was a major factor to the families involved. It was this situation which led to the establishment of a "Lutheran Welfare Blood Bank."

Persons may donate blood at either the California Lutheran Hospital in Los Angeles or the Santa Monica Hospital in Santa Monica, requesting that it be placed to the credit of the Lutheran Welfare Council.